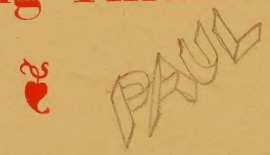
ROBERT ROYALTON

AND HIS

Covered Wagon

By An Unknown Author

This True Story of Life Love, Romance and Exciting Thrills



WILL please you, as its homey interest spans the heart, and will glide your passive moments back to other days.

ITS whispering echoes will call you back to read it again and again, for it steals away all thoughts of worry as it is an out door book of love and sunshine.

IT WILL please grown-ups to read who have brought their young hearts along, who can still see the flowers along the pathway and whose laughter and love have not all dried up.

THIS true story is surrounded with the breath of all outdoors, an out door book that will live on, with Bob the farm boy as it's living actor all of which he was in this true story.

ROBERT ROYALTON AND HIS
COVERED WAGON

The Out Door Book of Thrills, Life, Love and Romance that Will Live On

ROBERT ROYALTON
FROM BOYHOOD TO YOUNG MANHOOD.

Bob walked the trail with a smile,
Hour after hour and mile after mile
Looking for a job waiting for a boy,
And when he found it—Oh, what joy!

ROBERT ROYALTON

The Veteran's Son who fought his own
battles with the power of inspiration
and courted the woman he loved
in a locomotive cab and on
the banks of the Wabash

BY

JOHN JAY LEIGHTON

ILLUSTRATED

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The Author

stands with uncovered head, his feet resting on the globe that quivers like the sea, and dedicates this book to the memory of

BOB'S MOTHER

whose Christian character still lives,—and to all boys born under the reach of the sun who have grown into young manhood and now stand on the threshold at the open gate of the world, with a will to do and dare.

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SYNOPSIS

This true story has been a long time on the way, but the delay has not been too long to wait for a story of boyhood to young manhood which we now present to the world. It is not a story of classic literature, but a homey-every-day-life story that will steal away all thoughts of worry and make the heart tingle with love that holds with a lasting grip.

The author was inspired to pen this true story from boyhood to young manhood, for those who have been fed up on fiction until they have become hungry for the reality. It was not then realized that this story of an American boy who was compelled to plow his own furrow through life to young manhood, would be received in the homes of the land with warmth and love, giving inspiration to the depths of the very soul.

The reader has an opportunity to ride with Bob across the plains in his Covered Wagon, and dine

with him at the camp ground after the meal has been cooked over the camp fire, and later ride with Bob on the Iron Horse when Bob became the Boy Engineer.

When you finish reading this story of life, love, and exciting thrills, it will not be cast aside and forgotten, for it will be cherished and loved in remembrance of the things that happened to Bob when he was a boy; that will bring back recollections of one's youth, for when you read it you'll read it again and again.

The American boy and young man is no quitter; he never gives up but will endeavor in some way to obtain the things for which he aspires. Bob's arrival on the great plains of the West, alone among strangers, when he was fourteen years of age, with only twenty-five cents in his pocket, was the background which came to him of ventures in the open.

This was the dominating spirit of those American boys who grew into manhood, emigrated in Covered Wagons to the Western Plains, erected sod houses and tilled the soil to furnish bread for this great American Nation.

There were many things that Bob encountered that challenged his advance. He concluded they were only tests to determine the kind of metal of which he was created. The great fear of defeat was only on the surface as he was too young to realize the dragging weight of responsibility.

When Bob was a child, an Indian Chief christened him HOPE-BOY-FROM-THE-SUN. This name dominated him, for Bob never gave up, no matter

what the difficulties that came up to block his trail. In Bob's Covered Wagon trip, in driving his mules across the Plains alone from the great West back to the States, there were many unnatural and exciting thrills that tried his young soul.

The savage wolves attacked him in the night, a cyclone paid him a visit, carried his Covered Wagon in the air and dumped him out in the darkness, while the thunder rolled and the lightning flashed.

Horse thieves stole his team while he was asleep by the roadside on the Plains. One of the wheels to his Covered Wagon broke down and Bob was compelled to travel three hundred miles with only three wheels to his wagon.

The self reliance and sporting spirit dominated him, entering into all of his doings, which was manifested in his every-day life. Before he was thirteen he had served as a farm boy, a miller, a painter, a carpenter, and for one day was the owner of a refreshment stand and made a net profit of $22.22.

With this money Bob accepted Horace Greeley's advice and went West for fortune and fame. The frontispiece shows where Bob had landed on the Plains among strangers, and started out with his carpet bag over his shoulder looking for a job that was waiting for a boy. The pure heart of love goes out to an honest, determined boy in admiration of youth.

This wonderful true story will ever stand out on the book shelf in the homes of the land as the book of books, in whispering echoes for all boys and

young men to drive on, when they will pass all obstructions encountered as they travel over their life's trail.

This true story of Robert Royalton and his Covered Wagon will live on and on, because its foundation is truth, hope and love which will eventually go into every home. It will do grown-ups no harm to read, if they have brought their young hearts along, and their love and laughter have not all dried up.

Boys and young men who read this story, are requested in the second chapter to make a pledge with Bob. This pledge you are to make and hold sacred and true upon honor of love divine. If kept it will bring into your lives the greatest reward that can come to you, which will be revealed at the end of the story.

The drive-on spirit of the American youth was bred in him, he never gives up, but will pierce through the armored forts of despair, and will blaze a new trail if it becomes important to his achievements.

The pen which wrote the biography of Bob's life was guided by a force that welded the moral of life into Bob's thrilling true story which holds the reader with a lasting grip. The true records of life contain the greatest stories, and such stories are the more interesting because they are problems that are familiar to all.

When Bob grew up, like all young men he fell in love, for there is a time that comes into the lives of young men, when the heart sings for a

mate. Bob fell desperately in love and courted his sweetheart in a locomotive cab and on the banks of the Wabash.

When you read this thrilling story, you will know more about the men in the cab who hold your life in their keeping, making fast speed on the rail. You will be caught in a current of living life that will not let go, as it will fire one with a will to do and dare, giving inspiration to wade through seas of difficulties and back-pulls.

All young men stand on the threshold, at the open gate of the world, with desires and impulses surging through their hearts, confronted with life and all its problems, as something new and unknown. Bob's story places them in the driving seat, holding the lines with a cracker on the end of the whip.

No matter where Bob's story may go to the four corners of the Globe, the lure of his dreams and daring spirit will hold like a magnet in its devotee to courage, for what is better than a true story to go ringing down through the long years of time, to give pleasure and inspiration to a lonely discouraged heart.

Give Bob this live American boy, the Veteran's Son, a place in your home; he will win your heart and loving support in broadcasting his true story to the world.

It would be unwise to prolong this synopsis, thus the author laid down his pen, turned out the light, retiring full of emotion. The love for, and the doings of boys dominated his very soul to be a boy once more, when he experienced a dream.

THE DREAM

He dreamed of the good old swimming hole,
And was strolling with fish line and pole
Up over the bank of the cool running river,
Where the boys would undress and shiver.

He dreamed there were many boys on the bank
Waiting their turn to run out on the plank,
While the quivering rays of the sun so hot
Burned their backs in a big round spot.

Dreamed they sprang in the air, down they go
In the deep cool running water far below,
With bubbles appearing on the surface above
As they dived down in the waters they loved.

He dreamed of foot prints of boys' bare feet,
As they ran on the spring-board to leap.
Come back, come back, my dear boyhood days
And let me dive with you boys in the waves.

The family clock awoke the author, as it pealed forth the hours of midnight, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve. Lighting his candle he discovered all the t's crossed and the i's dotted when he signed his name the

UNKNOWN AUTHOR.

GIRLHOOD
YES, THIS IS HAZEL

SALUTING THE STARS AND STRIPES, AN AMERICAN GIRL, WHO IS ONE OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE GREAT STATE OF INDIANA.

PLEDGES HER ALLEGIANCE
TO THE FLAG

The American Boy stands side by side with the American Girl, and together they pledge their Allegiance to Old Glory and the United States of America for which it stands. One Nation indivisible, with liberty and justice to all.

The author would be pleased to take girlhood along with Bob in his thrilling story; we must leave them in mother's care and love to grow up, marry our young men and keep them true.

Mother's love is the most wonderful in all of God's creation, for it pulls out the poisoned arrows from the heart AND KEEPS THE FAITH OF THE WORLD ALIVE.

CHAPTER I

TO THE lover of books. If the flowers along your pathway have all faded, and the love streams in your life have dried up and your heart has become cold, then this true story of thrills, life and love, from boyhood to young manhood will bring you back to the charms of youth.

Assembled between the covers in this book will be found a vast amount of material of wide variety and unusual interest, with heart throbs of sorrow and happiness of which human life is made.

It will bring laughter to a wrinkled face and warm a cold heart, for it brings fun, and ache, with a tang of out door life that throbs with real action and the flame and fire of youth.

It takes one from youth on into young manhood with a true story on wheels that roll deep into the heart with a romance on the Iron Horse that is more thrilling than fiction.

For the sake of convenience, we re-name Robert, Bob, for Bob is short and definite and will be more

convenient in taking up his young life in this true homey story, which is penned in plain boy fashion.

Bob's story makes an outdoor book that will live on, for it is surrounded with the breath and fragrance of all outdoors with the hills, valleys, rivers, mountains and the plains, throughout its pages, with Bob the farm boy as its living actor, all of which he was, in his true story from boyhood to young manhood.

The Covered Wagon in this story was not a fictitious one: it was a real wagon, assembled by Bob's own hands on the plains of the West, in which he rode over the trail, driving his mules back to the States and his boyhood home, a distance of fifteen hundred miles.

Alone? yes, Bob was alone. If he had had a boy companion, it would have been the truest kind of sport, preparing his meals over the camp fire, out on the wild prairie, watching the mimic pictures in the dying coals, which bring sleepy eyes to a tired boy traveler.

Bob's personality passes through the pages of this book in swift review. The author behind the curtain is able to give a truthful description of the joys and sorrows that came into Bob's young life.

The orchestra plays, the curtain is raised, giving a clear view of the grand stage of nature as this thrilling play is being acted, of Bob Royalton and his Covered Wagon. To throw the searchlight of public opinion burning by the oil of criticism into the doings of Bob Royalton, is to reveal his good and bad deeds alike.

No boy can tell what he would do until he is thrown upon his own resources. Grown-ups often make mistakes that a boy would not make; thus in reading this true story of the doings of Bob, it should be remembered that youth and age each stand holding an end of the life line, one with and the other without experience.

The world will always be willing to go back to its youthful days where it began. This story goes back to those days, portraying the action of this real live American boy from boyhood to young manhood with thrills of boy and young manhood life.

Since the days of Robinson Crusoe, there has perhaps been no boy or man who came in contact, face to face, with so many exciting thrills as did Bob Royalton and they were all real. Bob had no man "Friday" to assist him, he was compelled to go it alone, the most trying of his experiences came to him before he was fifteen years of age.

This American boy launched his boat on the foaming sea of difficulties at once, because he was compelled to do so. There was no time to paddle around the shallow waters to get accustomed to the oars. The sea was running high from the first. The tide flowed in and out in Bob's young life, and when the splashing waves dashed him under, he managed to reach shore and was soon ready for another try.

In reading this true story of an American boy as he grew into young manhood, one should enter into the spirit of youth, for then the critic will be guided back to the time when he was a boy and

remember. Bob was compelled to fight it out alone, yes alone, single handed, without any reinforcements.

In considering the youthful career of Bob, his boyhood days were different from those of other boys of his neighborhood. If such had not been the case, this true story would never have been written, but as it is, the reader follows Bob over the rough trail of his life, with tears and laughter, wondering what will happen next.

Bob grew up as do plants, absorbing vitality and life from the atmosphere around him. Beyond the fact that this is a true story and the certainty that it will give great pleasure to the youth and adult reader and will eventually go into every home, Bob will be remembered for what he did, and the reader will closely follow him with interest, hand in hand, over the trail of his young life, the like of which has never before been seen in printed pages.

Every story is like every boy; there must be a beginning, and in order to commence this story it will be necessary to introduce Bob's father for a few pages while Bob is growing up before we can take up Bob's life sitting in the driving seat holding the lines with a cracker on the end of the whip, and later, when Bob became the boy engineer, driving the Iron Horse pulling the Boston Special Train across the Desert in New Mexico.

Bob's father was born and reared in the State of Maine. He was a Yankee of the old stock. His parents lived on a farm which was covered with

stones. He was taught to pile them in rows through the different fields, making the farm look like a checkerboard with its square fields outlined by stone fences. It was there that he grew to be a young man with a strong and determined will power that he inherited from his father, whose grandfather assisted in blazing the trail after the *Mayflower* landed.

He became restless, like many other young men of his time and went West, locating in the State of Indiana. He purchased a piece of land from Uncle Sam's big farm in the tall forest, in Lagrange County, Indiana, on the banks of the White Pigeon River.

He felled the forest trees, hewing them on two sides to be used in the construction of a log cabin for a home for himself and his newly wedded wife. It was growing late in the fall when Mr. Royalton swung his axe against the first tree, setting the chips flying out over the dead grass, for the commencement of his western home.

Had one seen him in his home-spun red flannel shirt, swinging that bit of polished steel with its two sharp edges fastened to a smooth hickory handle, he would have concluded that there was force and determination in that man.

Mr. Royalton we find here in the very prime of life, making the one great effort to carve out a home. To be sure, this work was hard, but hard work those days was a labor of love. In a short time he had sufficient trees cut and hewn to erect his log cabin.

There were two rooms on the first floor, and a large fireplace. There was a room above, with sloping sides, which was reached by a ladder in the corner of the living room.

Clearing out the forest for a new home requires great determination and will power. The country, then, was thinly settled and the red man with his tomahawk was yet to be seen and the more plentiful the settlers, the more safety did the white people feel, who had courage and determination inherent in them from the time the Pilgrims landed. Here Mr. Royalton was clearing the land and making fence rails, the same as President Lincoln did in his young manhood days.

There was rejoicing in the hearts of those two young people from the State of Maine, when the log cabin was completed and they moved in, starting the fire in the big fireplace, from the dry logs cut in the forest near at hand.

Over the fireplace there were hung the pictures of George Washington and President Lincoln. Mr. Royalton's trusty rifle hung over the mantel and the powder horn from its stock, which gave them protection and was used in supplying his table with game, which, at that time was plentiful.

America, in those days, was young. Advancement and progress were not imagined as they move this great country today. We now live in advance of those early days. Our young men are not now required to blaze out the forest and shovel their paths before them, as their ancestors did then, in their homespun clothing, living on corn meal bread

THE BIG STORK BRINGS LITTLE BOB TO HIS MOTHER'S ARMS, IN THE LOG CABIN IN THE FOREST.

which made them strong and healthy. What a change! What a picture for those fathers and mothers to look upon!

It was in this log cabin, located in the forest, on the bank of the White Pigeon River, that little Bob came drifting in on the wings of a big stork. When he opened his blue eyes and peered out of the cabin window at the big forest trees, his mother had him nestling in her arms, with that beaming love that can only come from the heart of a mother.

* * * * * * *

The Indians who paddled their canoes up and down the winding stream in the forest, near the cabin, were now very friendly to Bob's father. In a few days they had learned in the Indian Village that there was a new arrival in the log cabin. The Indian Chief came down with his trusty squaw to pay their respects to the mother and to see little Bob. They had a pair of Indian-made baby moccasins and a string of red beads and were permitted to christen little Bob, "HOPE-BOY-FROM-THE-SUN."

Little Bob, like all boys, just grew up. His Indian Christian name was well bestowed, for, as Bob grew to be a husky boy he could climb a tree like a cat and had a sunny and hopeful disposition.

At this time the great American war was on. President Lincoln called for married men, as all the single men had been called. Bob's father was one of those who was called and his departure is described further on. Mrs. Royalton moved from the

log cabin in the forest to a nearby village, named Scott.

The little cottage which Bob and his mother secured for their home in this small village was located on the bank of the White Pigeon River. The back end of the lot ran down to the water, which was the "race" that conveyed the water to the saw and flouring mills. Between the cottage and the saw mill there was a large vacant lot. In the winter the forest trees were hauled in by the farmers who unloaded them in piles on which they would paint on the ends the names of the owners.

It was not strange that Bob should start his eventful career in this sleepy village of the forest, that, in after years, held many joys which he could recall with pleasure; boyhood days past and gone, and that made barefoot boys all they afterwards became as men.

When a new family moved into the small village the inhabitants were interested, and when Mrs. Royalton's limited amount of furniture was being unloaded from a wagon that was drawn by an ox team, the neighbors were "rubber-necking" at their windows to see just what was to be seen. The boys of the town were standing about, like cranes in a meadow, first on one foot, then the other, as if to get a better view of the passing scene. Moving in and out of a small village in those days was quite a novelty.

The town boys had been watching Bob, and were waiting for him to come out on the street. When he did, it was when his mother sent him to the

village store on an errand. The town boy who was supposed to be the leader, stepped up to Bob with a chip on his shoulder and dared Bob to knock it off. Bob was no "sissy" boy, not by a "jugful," he never had a fight in his life and of course did not knock off the chip as he had no desire to get into trouble with the town boys.

This was not to be with those town boys, for the leader gave Bob a slap, which instantly aroused his anger. In an instant Bob had this boy rolling over on the ground and when the skirmish was over, Bob was on top, holding the arms of the bully boy down to the ground like a vice. The town boys all looked on with envy as they saw that the new boy could take care of himself.

It often takes a little scrap among boys in order to center their admiration for each other. This is the real way with boys of testing out a new boy who comes among them to live, as all boys must be tried out in order to be sure they are worthy of the name "boy," and to become members of their "gang."

Bob inherited his dominating will power from his father, the love of flowers and all the beauties of nature from his mother. He learned while young to have confidence in himself and to master his own battles and did not run to his mother every time there was danger ahead.

No boy should suppress his own good opinion of himself, for if he is honest and upright, the whole world loves such a boy. The time for the opening of the village school was at hand, and while Bob

had never been to school, he was taught by his mother to read and write, and of course was not placed in the A B C class on his first day in school.

This small red schoolhouse had one room, with an entrance hall in front, in one end of which the children hung their outer garments on wooden pegs fastened in the wall. The teacher's desk was on a raised platform near the entrance door, back of which was the blackboard; at the bottom of this was a box in which were kept the chalk and sheepskin eraser.

In front of the teacher's desk there were two long recitation seats where all in the class could see the board. It was indeed very embarrassing when a pupil was called to the blackboard, to work out a problem in view of the whole school, if he had not learned his lesson in advance.

There was a large stove near the center of the room to keep the children warm during the long cold winter. Piles of wood chunks from the forest were piled up at the side of the schoolhouse. On very cold days the large stove often became red in spots as it gave out its waves of heat into the room.

The home-made seats had many scars left upon them as a reminder of former days. Boys will be boys; there is no question about that. That their pent-up energy was controlled was evidenced from the fact that over the entrance door casing there rested a stout switch. None of the boys cared to have an interview with the teacher out in the hall the second time, for the switch in the hand of Frank

Galloway, the teacher, meant business, for it always left an impression.

There was near the teacher's desk a large globe held in place by a swivel; upon it was painted in bright colors a map of the world. This globe could be revolved by the teacher during geography lesson when an idea was to be especially presented to the minds of the pupils.

There was a water pail which contained cool drinking water, with a long handled dipper, and it was indeed a coveted privilege to be selected to pass the water. This was great sport for Bob who would pass the water under the watchful eye of the teacher. It was always a mystery how the teacher could be emphasizing some problem on the blackboard, with a piece of chalk, and know what was going on in the school room, for like every other person he had only one pair of eyes.

The greatest time of those school days was when the teacher would announce a special meeting for recitations, song and spelling. At these gatherings the parents would come to enjoy with the children the pleasure of the evening entertainment.

Bob once had a recitation that he was to deliver at the evening entertainment. He had this well learned and knew that he would go through all right. Now every real, live boy of course has a sweetheart whom he watches over in play time to protect her from the larger children. Bob was no exception, for he had a little sweetheart with beautiful curls, whose name was Della.

When Bob's name was called he proceeded to the

platform, made his bow in the usual way and began his recitation. "Press on solves the problems of all heroes, it is the rule by which triumph and victory are obtained." At this Bob looked down, and there on the front seat looking up at him were Della's blue eyes. She of course was proud of her hero. Bob saw those blue eyes and sweet smile and instantly forgot the rest of his piece and was pulled from the platform by his apron strings.

It was indeed the greatest of sport and excitement when the time came to choose sides for the spelling contest. The one who was capable to advance to the head of the contest was considered worthy of all the glory and to wear the crown.

It cannot be disputed but those past and gone school days were instrumental in sending forth the youth fairly equipped. Those days of long ago will bring back the atmosphere of times forever gone, and it was the early teaching in the country school house, which laid the very foundation for our great Republic.

This homey story would not be complete, if the author did not describe the home surroundings and early life of Bob. It was here that he received the inspiration that was given him by his mother and his school teacher, to drive on; the assurance that it was the drive-on spirit that would carry him forward to success.

Of course the boys and girls of today who have all the advantages provided for them by their parents in obtaining a good education may not be interested in those early days of their fathers and

mothers, who may have secured their education in the little red school house with patches on their clothing, while *their* fathers and mothers were clearing the mighty forests where cities now stand.

It would not be right to take a good, honest, jolly boy, and start him in to do a certain thing because his parents had willed it for him. No; better by far allow him to go out in the world alone with your love to let him shift for himself, for then in the future you will be proud of that boy. Nature asserts herself and puts him in the place she had intended for him.

It is far better to let your boy work out his own salvation with your love and good cheer to back him, and the sooner a young man learns the most essential thing in his life the better he will be and that is, he should create as much as he consumes. Character-building comes along with the above and this cannot be accomplished in idleness. The boy, to become a real man must start right. He must lean on himself, the younger the better. He will then grow strong under the effort. He soon finds he can stand alone, and you can count on his life being for something good, noble and useful.

The small village of Scott where Bob commenced to work out his own destiny, was located on the bank of the White Pigeon River, that flowed with crooks and turns, through the hills and valleys the same as most rivers flow.

Although this was a sleepy, small inland village, its inhabitants were people of honest hearts. The chief manufacturing industry was a flouring mill,

where the farmers went to have their wheat made into flour and the corn into corn meal. Near by was a saw mill for making the timber of the forest into lumber.

There was a chapel for worship and a little school house with its long benches that had been worn smooth by the children's clothing.

The one general store that kept the supplies for the people was also the post office for Uncle Sam's mail that came into the village twice each week, delivered by the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway, at White Pigeon, a town located about five miles further down the river.

There was a blacksmith shop where Mr. Wise, the smith, kept the fire under the forge and did all kinds of work for the people in the surrounding neighborhood, shoeing horses, sharpening the grub hoes and plowshares, setting the wagon tires, welding broken iron and everything in his line. All his accomplishments were not locked up in the little shop with its dirty windows when he turned the key in the door after the day's work was over, for he was one of the deacons in the church and led the prayer meetings on Friday nights.

There was one physician, "The Doctor," as he was known, Dr. Grubb, who drove a sorrel horse with a white stripe in her face, and had four white stockings. He drove this horse on a two-wheeled sulky, and kept his worn pill bag under the seat.

This sorrel mare was a wonder, and was the admiration of all in the village. She would usually sense the importance when an emergency call came

by one on horseback. The doctor would hitch her to the sulky on the barn floor, his son Albert would open the doors, when the little beauty queen with white stockings would take the bit in her teeth and come out of the barn with both front feet in the air.

In winter time the Doctor would drive this wonderful steed hitched to a red cutter, with a string of silver-toned sleigh bells buckled around her body back of the forelegs. The music of those wonderful bells seemed to charm this white stockinged beauty, as its tones pierced the fresh, cold country air giving exhilaration to those who saw her pass, striking snow balls from her shining shoes, and the frozen foam from her champing bit flying in the air.

In all creation there was not one to compare with this wonderful horse, taking her master to the bedside of the sick. She would pull the cutter with the lines, which had buckled loops in the end, through which the Doctor's hands, covered with bear skin mittens, would hold fast.

The Doctor loved his horse, as he did his little boy Albert, who is now a prominent physician. This old fashioned Doctor had a large practice in the surrounding country. He was a man with kind, soft blue eyes, and a heart of gold, whose personality was conveyed to his patients. When he would arrive at the home of a patient, he would enter the room with a broad smile, feel of the pulse and look at the tongue, and first prescribe a large dose of castor oil.

The Doctor would then take from his case a sheet of white paper; this he would cut up in small

squares with a knife that resembled a putty knife. Taking out different small phials from the well worn pill bag, he would compound the medicine, taking from each bottle a small portion, mixing together a large or small dose as the patient's condition required.

After all, those days of long ago when the people depended on the old fashioned Doctor, people lived and died the same as now. Their living was plain and substantial without all of the frosty frills of today. Those dear old mothers knew what was good for the entire family, as their corn meal bread gave them strength and health.

Oh what fun, what pleasure, what a good time, the boys and girls had, on the long winter evenings when the race was frozen over solid and safe. This race that ran at the edge of the village conveyed the water to the mill and was one mile long connected to a large pond of water, that was formed by a dam across the White Pigeon River.

About seven in the evening on the long winter nights the young people would gather at Bob's mother's cottage near the race, put on their skates, leaving their heavy coats with Bob's mother until they returned. Away they go on the one-mile skate singing the song one could never forget.

"Hip, hip, away we go,
Hip, hip, we'll soon be there.
Hip, hip, the ice is fine.
Hip, hip, we are the pair
That knows when we get there."

At the pond, many hemlock trees were standing

in the water, these had died with the long contact with the water. The fast skaters would arrive there first and set a couple of the trees on fire. Woodpeckers had bored holes in them, and the dry pitch would light instantly when the match was applied.

Oh what fun, what invigorating life for the boys and girls as they skated around the blazing trees. It made their cheeks red and put life into their growing bodies, giving them pep and go, skating around the blazing trees that made the dark as light as day.

At eight-thirty, all would leave the pond together, paired off with those each one liked best. Oh such fun, hand in hand, first right then left, on they go gliding over the glassy ice as if on wings, with their shining skates glistening in the moonlight. Can you remember? How could you ever forget?

The very life of the nation lies in the growth and onward march of our boys and girls. Join with them, in their frolics of fun, as it will keep your heart young, and bring you back to days that one should never forget.

There was no mayor in Scott, no alderman, no policeman, no jail, no lawyer, no bank, no opera house, no electric lights, no telephone, but all the people were on the square, living and doing their work with full confidence in one another, which brought happiness to all of those plain, honest people, whose word was as good as a government bond.

There is no place in the entire world like the old

home place of boyhood. There is no word in any tongue like the word, MOTHER. If that boyhood home was on the farm, or in the village of the forest, it does not matter, if love ruled as master, it left lingering memories that can never be erased. The word "Mother," can never, never be forgotten, for Mother gave life to us. How could any one ever forget Mother? Would any one want to forget her?

Go back to those boyhood days if you have grown to be a man, think it over in your silent chamber if you have ever wronged your mother. If you have, God will judge you, for Mother, yes Mother, is the purest of God's creations. Oh, Mother, *your* mother, *my* mother, the foundation of the world is Mother. In childhood, manhood, age and death, there is Mother to lean on, for Mother's love is always there, forever and ever, for Mother's love never fails because it comes from Mother.

If you have grown to be a man, look back to those boyhood days when you and other boys gathered on the back steps of the kitchen. The door was, perhaps, open and your mother was frying doughnuts. You went in and took about a dozen from the jar, coming out with one on each finger for each of your boy playmates while your good mother just smiled. Do you remember this? How could you forget those doughnuts, fried with a hole in them? No other person could make them just like your mother.

Do you remember when you sat on the fence and saw the cows coming out of the wooded pasture?

were once boys. Of course, Dad has grown up and has been doing business with the business world for a long time. Many drift into a cold atmosphere of life with their business that is bewildering to a boy —many times bewildering to the heart of one's own child.

Now Dad, if a strange boy should come into your office with his hat in his hand, his heart, perhaps pounding against his breast, as he walks up to you to inquire for a job—what would you do? You would not request him to get out, would you? You know that every boy's life is made up of friendship, bound together with links of love and affection.

Of course you would not order him out. You would request him to come up to you and you would talk to him in plain boy fashion, which would make his eyes sparkle and the lump in his throat would disappear, for he would instantly see in your eyes that affection and love that goes deep into a boy's heart.

If this boy does not come into your office, it may be because you have it guarded, perhaps by another boy who is paid to say, "The boss is busy". Never be too busy to interview a boy. If one does not come to see you, look around the corner. You'll find a boy. You may find one who has a widowed mother who is struggling to keep her boy and has but little to give him except her love. Find a boy, Dad, give him your big heart and love and the wrinkles will disappear from your face. It will start up the love streams in your life and they will ever flow out and over the surging tide.

Before we proceed farther, we now must go back and tell about Bob's father leaving the home he had erected in the forest. That little log cabin in the woods on the bank of the river was the dearest place to him, for it was home, home,—where love shone out of the windows and doors. Mr. Royalton was a man of the highest honor, and always lived a clean life. Here in the forest was his love-garden, his wife and boy, the flowers that he ever protected.

When the Governor of the State notified the County Sheriff that President Lincoln had called men with families to the front, that they were to leave the next morning, Mr. Royalton fully realized the situation.

That night, the last night for Mr. Royalton to be at home with those he loved and who were dearer to him than his own life, he and his good wife, when they retired, knelt down by the bedside, arm in arm, and prayed to God for his blessing that would shield them during his absence and bring a speedy return to them of all the happiness which they had enjoyed.

The next morning a bugle call was heard from the main road that ran down through the forest which passed near the log cabin home.

Out in the main road was Captain Webster with a company of men that had been formed, one from each family as they marched along. They all knew Bob's father and as they waited for him, the bugle call was sounded once more and, as the sound came rolling through the tall trees, Mr. Royalton knew the call was for him. He halted at the well which

he had dug with his own hands, lowered the old oaken bucket fastened to a rope which was attached to a pole suspended in the air. As the bucket was lifted to the curb, large beads of perspiration were standing out on his brow.

Taking a drink of the water from the well he lifted little Bob up in his arms, and kissed him good-bye. His dear wife was standing in the cabin door, with the tears running down over her round cheeks. Putting his strong arms around her waist, he bade her to be brave, as his Country had called him and he must not be unfaithful.

Each member of that company had only recently departed from their loved ones and well knew the feeling in Mr. Royalton's big heart.

Mrs. Royalton was quite handy with her needle and she managed to get along though not in a way that was what her proud spirit desired.

She was making sacrifices because it was her duty, and duty to this woman came before anything else while her husband was on the battlefield, fighting his good brothers, in hostile armies, that tore mothers' hearts into shreds.

Before other boys of Bob's age were through playing with hoops and marbles, he was at work in the fields. Bob could never forget the first job away from home, working for strangers. Oh, that feeling of homesickness that came into his young bleeding heart, as he was driving on through the fields of despair, away from his boyhood home and mother.

When a boy is left to shift for himself, starting

out among strangers, there is no sickness like the homesickness that comes to him.

After working on a farm for some time Bob decided that he should learn a trade, as one with a trade of some kind was better off than one who just worked at odd jobs. After his day's work was done on the farm and he retired for the night, Bob would look out at the shining stars and the moon in the heavens. All of this light was small to his young soul when compared to the light in the window at his mother's cottage home. If you are away from home, away from Mother and Dad, striving for success, stick it out and drive on. You will win, for you cannot fail.

On Saturday nights after Bob had his chores done on the farm, he would walk six miles to the village, as his mother's cottage was Bob's golden paradise. She could tell by his lean, lank appearance that he was getting plenty of work to do on the farm. He was now thirteen years old and was strong for his age. A boy that always looked on the bright side of things, he was "HOPE-BOY-FROM-THE-SUN" as the old Indian Chief had christened him. Bob would never give up, he would drive on in spite of all discouragements that came up in his path.

We must now relate one of the saddest things that any pen can describe. We have put this off as long as possible as we know that every boy that reads this story of Bob is driving on, hand in hand, with him and we know you will realize this great sorrow that came into Bob's life at this time.

The mail came to this village where Bob and his

mother lived twice each week,—on Wednesdays and Saturdays. When Bob was at home, he would go to the post office for the mail. On this Saturday evening he went over to the store which was also the post office. Bob was there when the mail came in. He saw the post master lay the bag upon the counter and with a key, unlock the brass lock that held the strap which went through the iron loops. Bob felt that, as they had not heard from his father in some time, there must be a letter in that mail bag for his mother. Some times one has a presentiment that thus and so is going to happen, and happen it does. When the mail was sorted, all of the townspeople were about, at least a representative from each family, to get their mail.

When the post master handed Bob a letter addressed to his mother, he looked at the hand writing and knew that his father had not addressed the letter. Hurrying home with this letter he opened the door to the cottage home and gave it to his mother.

It makes the author's heart sad to pen this letter here for other boys to read. But in this life there are joy and sadness, therefore, we must always be prepared to meet the things that come into our lives. The letter read as follows:

"Mrs. Royalton,
Scott, Ind.

"Dear Mrs. Royalton:

"It is indeed a painful duty for me to write you the sad news contained in this letter. I must notify

you that your beloved husband, whom I loved as a good friend, can never return to you and your boy. He was fatally wounded while acting as a color bearer, carrying Old Glory on the firing line, cheering his comrades on.

"After the terrific battle which we had just won I went back over the battlefield and found him lying on the ground holding Old Glory. His life blood was slowly oozing from the fatal wound in his breast. As I approached him, he requested me to write down his last message, for you and his boy, Bob. When he had finished dictating this message his voice was so weak that I could but hear him whisper.

"I well remember when we left his home, how he looked back at you and his boy and said to me, 'Captain, it is my duty or I could never leave them.' In him, you have lost a good and noble husband, the nation a brave and true soldier. I will have his body shipped back to you, for burial in the village burial ground. May God give you strength and bless you.

"Yours affectionately,
"C. WEBSTER.

"Captain Company G
"88 Indiana Volunteers."

THE LAST MESSAGE

Send home a last message for me,
  Express in it a father's love,
And that our country will be free,
  With the blessings of Heaven above.

Tell them not of smoke and lead,
  Nor of hardships that are untold,
Nor of my comrades lying dead
  On the battlefield so cold.

Earth with its joys and sorrows
Slowly vanish from my eyes,
And I hail a bright tomorrow
Dawning in the distant skies.

O, how sad my wife and child!
You will grieve for me, I know,
Yet, the God who dwells above us
Bids me come and I must go.

You will listen to my footsteps
To come through the open door,
And sadly you will remember
Father can come back no more.

When you wander in the church yard,
When beside my grave you stand,
Do not weep—for I'll be living
In the bright and happy land.

What a shock for Bob and his mother! May God bless the noble mothers of the world! There is no sorrow or pain but what they are able to bear. It is the mothers of the world upon whom all responsibility rests for love and purity.

Bob's mother struggled on through her hardships and tears for the glory that love lends for her boy. Disappointments, discouragements, sadness, hope, faith and love that must come to all in this life, are the things that mothers weep over.

Love must rule, love must heal, love must guide, thus we leave all in the heart of love. The human world is craving for more love. Love for mother, love for wife, love for father, love for children and love for our neighbors. We all crave for more love, for the higher realities are of the "KINGDOM OF LOVE".

The author will draw the curtain to shut out the view of the world, from this picture which was indeed a reality, that came into the lives of Bob and his mother. Bob was now a fatherless boy, a Son of a Veteran who gave up his life for Old Glory.

What a glorious death, if death must be, to die defending Old Glory, the Stars and Stripes, the flag of Love, the flag that is unfurled for peace and hope for all mankind. The flag that Bob's father carried on the battlefield, through smoke and lead, was now wrapped around his silent form as they laid him to rest in the church yard.

Bob's mother at this time was in the prime of womanhood, and was blessed with a strong will, and made the very best of the things that came into her life. It is only those women who have had like experiences, that will be able to glance at the past, and there behold in reality the picture that came to many of our American Mothers.

It is over now, and forever. Our Country paid dearly for the sacrifice; giving up thousands of our brave men of the North and South, brothers who were using their bayonets against each other for a cause they thought to be right. We will not dwell on this sad picture that brings moisture to our eyes, as it is over now, and past forever and ever.

It showed to the entire world that the American Nation was made up of a race of heroes, men who could, for the love they bore their flag, walk calmly up to the cannon's mouth, and there, with their heart's blood, write indelibly on the great tablet of

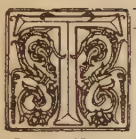
fame and honor their faith in the future of their beloved Country.

The great vision of this reality, and the future was now being unfolded in Bob's life. He was left a fatherless boy, to work out his own destiny, the same as many other boys of this time were compelled to do. He had the will power that was inherited from his father, and the blessing and guidance from his mother; this stimulated him on in his endeavor to find things to do that would add to the means of their support.

It was the love and beauty that came from his boyish heart that opened the doors for him to pass out into the path of thorns and roses. Bob had the faculty of writing his name with love and kindness in the hearts of his boyhood companions, and this would cling to him as he grew up. His motto was to drive on in the face of all pull backs, and never give up; IT MUST AND WILL BE DONE.

Of poor boys who have climbed to success
There were millions of them, I guess.

CHAPTER II



IS but a step from tears to smiles, but a short time from dark to day, but a long, long time from boyhood to manhood. In a few days Bob called on the miller in the village for a job in the mill; he felt it his duty to be as near his mother as possible during her sadness and grief, as he was now her main support.

"Well, Bob, I think I can use you," said the miller. "You are a strong boy and I believe in time you will become quite handy and will soon understand the machinery in the mill. That, of course, will depend on the interest you take in the work."

When Bob was a very young boy, if he could get hold of a saw and some nails, the entire back yard was his work bench. He would make things just as all boys try to do. Machinery always fascinated him. He was now to have his first experience in seeing wheels move in a circle, to learn all about the force and power that made them move.

Going back over Bob's trail through the eyes of memory, we find his eagerness and energy made up for his inexperience of youth. What money he had was the result of his own efforts. The old mill, like the saw mill near by, was run by water power, the water being supplied by the White Pigeon River. One mile up the river there was a dam

thrown across the stream which conveyed as much water as was required for power in the mills. From the dam to the mill power there was a high bank, which was thrown up to convey the water down into the race to the mill. Willow trees had been set in the bank and they had grown to be large trees with shaggy branches hanging out over the water. Their roots had grown into the bank, giving it strength and support to hold the water as it ran from the dam down to the mill.

On summer days the boys would go up on the bank, undress and plunge into the cool waters. Oh, such joy for a growing boy. There is nothing in the world that will compare to those boyhood days.

This long, high bank was a source of trouble to the owners of the mill, especially when the earth thawed out in the spring and muskrats dug holes through the bank to see what was on the other side. This allowed the water to run through and it would wash out the entire bank for some distance, and turn the water from its natural course to the low land with a rush and roar that could be heard in the village.

Early, on Monday morning, Bob went back to the farm where he was employed and laid his case before the farmer, stating he had an opportunity to work in the mill and learn the milling trade. He was delighted with the prospects before him, if the farmer would let him off. This would give him more time to study and improve his spare time in getting the education which he craved and would enable him to be near his mother.

When Bob made a bargain and had given his word, it was law itself with him. He would not think of breaking an agreement with the farmer.

"Well, Bob, under the circumstances, I will let you off to learn the milling trade," said the farmer, "then you will be at home with your mother which I well know will please you very much. Always remember, Bob, there is no one in the entire world that you owe as much to as you do to your mother. Assist her as much as you can by doing all the little things, and some day when you grow up to be a man, and she is gone, you will look back to the things you did for her, and they will give you more real joy and happiness than any other thing that will come into your life.

"Had I realized this early in life, I would have no regrets now, as my good mother was a drudge for the whole family, now that she is gone, these things come back to me and give me a sorrowful heart, as it will you, my boy, if you do not always consider that mother's love is the greatest and grandest thing that can ever come into your life. I know, my boy, you will grow up to be a good and useful man. Just keep on doing the things that make other people love you and you will be worthy of all the good things that come into your life."

We must remember this boy's life in every page of the first part of Bob's true story. If you have grown up, think of your past, when you were a young boy. You must do so in order to become interested in Bob's thrilling story.

The greatest insurance our country has, is not in

its great powerful and expensive battleships or in its army. It is in our young manhood which offers the very best investment we can put money into, for the boy is the entire multiplication table.

Bob left the farm, with the consent of the farmer, who had found the love of his good mother when it was too late. He realized that he had found the love for his mother after she had passed on. This good farmer was throwing some sunshine in Bob's life picturing to him what the love of a good mother would mean to him, a young boy.

When Bob arrived home he put his arms around his mother and told her how much he loved her, how much she meant to him and now that he was going into the mill to work, he would not only be her boy but would care for her,—take his father's place, as head of the family.

The next morning Bob commenced work in the mill, and it was not long before he knew flour from bran, and also how the miller measured the toll from the farmer's sacks before the grain was fed in between the large mill stones. He said he did not remember taking toll out of the sack after the wheat had been made into flour, although he heard some farmers say they thought this had been done.

The old grist mill had stood on the bank of this river for many years. The water that furnished its power was conveyed from the White Pigeon River in a race from the dam above, as described. There was a large flume built of heavy timber, the entrance to which was covered with slats, known as a "rack" to catch all floating wood to prevent it

from rushing into the water wheel. It was not long before Bob knew where the head gate and the gear for raising it was located.

It was his work to start and stop the machinery in the mill, sew the belts, take in the wheat and corn from the farmers' wagons, measure the toll, oil the machinery, and in a very short time he felt competent to, and did, run the old mill. If there was anything wrong, he soon detected it in the sound of the machinery, which when it was running would shake like one with a chill.

To see Bob reach into the flour spout and take out a handful and feel it with his fingers, one might think that he was on the road that leads up to being a real miller. The mill man soon placed a great deal of confidence in Bob's ability, and it was not long before he had full charge of running the mill, while the owner would go to the village store and sit around on old shoe boxes and tell stories with the rest of the idlers.

One day Bob discovered that a large belt that turned the bolting machinery on the upper floor had broken. As he went to lower the gear on the head gate to shut off the water from the water wheel, the cog broke and fastened itself into the wheel so tightly that he could not get it out without assistance. Bob rushed down stairs, over the flume, to knock out the pin that held the other end of the chain.

As he walked across the plank that led to the head gate it broke and pitched Bob headlong into the flume directly over the water wheel, a most

dangerous place for a boy to be, as the suction from the big wheel, as the water poured down through it, would draw anything into it. Bob caught hold of a cleat that was nailed on the inside of the flume and pulled himself out. He was soaking wet, through and through, and nearly scared to death. He finally got out the lower pin which let the gate down, shutting off the water from the wheel. In the meantime the hopper on the main floor ran dry, letting the big powerful mill stones come together. They soon began to warm up and smoke poured out of the windows and cracks in the old mill.

The population of the village came running to the mill with pails, thinking the mill was on fire.

It took about two weeks to recut the mill stones and start the mill once more. Bob continued work in the mill as this accident was not of his making.

The owner of the mill had a boy who came home from school where he had been for some time. The miller informed Bob that he did not want his own boy to be idle and he would have him help him in the mill.

Bob, at this time, was thirteen years old. He was beginning to feel that he was of some importance. Millers usually wore white suits, and, as Bob was gaining experience in the mill, his importance and looks must conform to the dignity of the position, therefore Bob wore a white suit, and always kept himself looking clean and neat in appearance, and his shoes shined. He realized that his appearance and cleanliness added greatly to the confidence that the flour, which came from the flour

spout in the old mill into the farmers' sacks, was clean.

The miller's son worked in the mill with Bob until he was quite familiar with all the machinery when Bob was informed by the miller that his son would take his place. Bob had worked on a farm, could hold the plow on a straight furrow as well as a man, and while in the mill had gained some experience which fascinated him.

He was now out of a job. He was a sturdy youngster, the kind of a boy that people like to have around. The miller's own son who had been away to school had taken his place in the mill, which blasted all his hopes, depriving him of learning the milling trade.

Bob's mother had taught him that all boys who were compelled to win their own way must expect disappointments and be compelled to climb over rough places, and that his will power to do so, would be backed by the joyful deeper things of hope, inspiration, beauty and love, and to always keep friendship with others in constant repair.

When one is compelled to earn every penny he has to be out of a job, where jobs are scarce, is putting him to a real test, especially when one is a boy.

In all the world there is no danger like the danger of idleness. To live is to be occupied. Every boy must realize that it is labor and love that brings good will to all mankind. Bob's young life seemed to be unfolding to him in beautiful dreams. Those dreams did not picture the hardships and

grinding struggles that were now coming gradually into his life.

BEFORE READING FARTHER IN THIS STORY, Bob wants all boys to take a pledge with him. This pledge you are to ever hold sacred and true, upon the honor of your boyhood and young manhood. This pledge is truly great, and if kept by you, will bring to you the greatest reward that can ever come into your life, which will be fully revealed to you at the end of this story.

The pledge you are to take is this:

"I WILL ALWAYS LEAD A CLEAN LIFE." This is the pledge that you are requested to take with Bob. As you work, live and strive, this will always be right before you; there will be an echo of remembrance that will flash this pledge before you when the tempter strives to make you break this promise.

The above pledge stands out in capital letters. You can't and must never forget it. As you strive for honor and success, you must remember that this pledge will assist you in fighting the hard battles of life that will surely come to you. You must always aim high, and keep your hope-basket filled with love flowers. Then, with your determination and will power—with the tools of hope and love—you cannot fail.

Set this down in your memory, so clearly that when you undertake any task it will be there before you. With these tools, and a clean, honest life, you can pierce through the darkest clouds of despair. The armored forts of discouragement will

be swept down and under with that mighty force of will power bred in you.

Bob wants you to meet him at the end of this story. He will be there to receive his reward for keeping the pledge with you, and he wants you to be sure to be there.

It will be a long, long time coming. You will have years of hard work and struggle before you. You will have grown into young manhood. Many of you may have experienced back-pulls and disappointments similar to those that came to Bob.

Never mind about the hard struggles; never mind what comes up into your life that seems to hold you back. Fight on, and be sure to remember that these pullbacks are only tests, to find out the kind of mettle you have in you.

It is not the sons of rich men that the determined poor boy has to fear who is pushing on to win; it is the boy who sweeps out the office and does errands for the boss, as wise men are always on the lookout for real boys who are determined to win a place.

Bob at this age was free from knowledge of anything but what was pure and good. He was unaccustomed to speaking bad words, and knew nothing about vice; fortunately he had always been in contact with good and honorable people and the sweet and pure surroundings of his mother and home. He was instructed by her to always be gentle in tone and manner, polite and courteous and that gentleness would come by experience.

The great battle of life is more than one half won

for young men if they are thrown in constant contact with men who have won their own way to the top; the aim of every boy and young man should be to do something beyond the sphere of his regular duties, for this always attracts the attention of those over him.

We must now hasten on, for all of Bob's friends will be anxious to learn about the hard knocks and struggles that gradually came to him. Before we can take the reader across the plains with Bob in his Covered Wagon, it will be necessary to relate some things that came into his life up to that time.

Bob was now out of a job. He could not lie around and wait for something to turn up. He had no one to intercede for him and as he had no means to live on it was up to him to secure something to do. His cheerful spirit and will power pushed him on and with the encouragement of his mother he was determined to win a place that would assist that mother in their support.

Bob went to White Pigeon, five miles from his town, to size up the situation. He had often been there with the mail wagon. Spring was at hand and the lilac bushes around his mother's cottage were full of buds; the robins had come. The birds of the air had started to mate and build their nests. This outdoor life put new "pep" and hope in the breast of Bob. Everyone was hustling, raking up the leaves from the yards to burn them, getting out the paint brush to paint, as the town's name of White Pigeon denoted purity.

Bob heard a man say he was to paint his barn and he asked him if he could not do the job. "Well, boy, are you a painter?" "No," said Bob, "but I can do you a good job." "Well," he said, "go up and look it over and give me your figure,—what you will do it for?"

Bob had painted over his mother's cottage and made his own paint from a recipe he had secured from an almanac, with skim milk and slack lime.

In starting this job, he procured an old wash tub, filled it half full of skim milk which he obtained from a neighbor, stirring into this the lime which had been slaked to the desired thickness of paint that would go on smoothly.

Mother's cottage was a small one story house, with two gables, front and back, the sides sloping down, and half windows were used on the sides.

After he had the cottage painted, it certainly looked fine as it had never before had any paint on it, being similar to the few other houses in this small village.

Bob looked over the small barn and decided he could paint it for eight dollars. It was an old barn which had not been painted for many years. The owner accepted Bob's offer for eight dollars to give the barn two coats of red paint. This paint comes in fine powder in barrels and all that one has to do is to mix it with oil and the paint is ready for the job.

Bob went into Hotchin Bros. Drug and Paint Store, secured the paint, oil and brush, and stated

he would pay for the supplies after the barn was painted.

The next morning found him at work on the old barn, bright and early. At two o'clock in the afternoon, he had one coat on. The paint, oil and brush had cost him $7.60. His forty cents profit on the job for one day's hard work did not pay him much. He evened up on the job in satisfaction at least, as he gave it the second coat the same day.

Bob had never learned the painter's trade and knew less about taking contracts.

White Pigeon, where he had secured some of his ideas about painting, is located on the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway, near the Michigan and Indiana line. There was an attraction at the depot of the railroad for Bob. He could see the Iron Horse in the yards, moving up to the huge water tank which was erected on large timbers about fifteen feet in the air. The fireman pulled down the water spout and soon filled the iron tank which was connected to the engine. He watched it as it backed on to the side track near the elevator and hitched onto a string of cars that were loaded with the farmers' wheat and produce from the farms about the country.

He watched its large wheels fastened to a crank that moved in and out of its sides from a cylinder as large as the rain barrel at his mother's cottage. Its panting breath and rolling smoke put inspiration into this young farm boy.

There was a round house painted red where those iron monsters were fed and groomed, and to take

a peek at the inside of this sacred place would be a treat to this boy. Bob walked up to the big home of the fire eater of the rail, with its ribs of steel.

Oh, but it looked big to him when he drew near. He had never before seen a building like that, with large black stacks sticking out through the roof.

One of the large doors was open and Bob ventured in, when a man, whom Bob supposed owned the railroad, stepped up to him and commanded his retreat, saying, "Boys are not allowed inside of the building." "Thank you," said Bob, "I would not carry away one of your engines. I merely wanted to look at one, having never been so near one before."

The man then allowed Bob to walk around the engine and satisfy his boyish curiosity. As he put his hands on the big steam power of the rail, a thrilling impulse went through his young body.

Walking into the man's office, Bob inquired of him if he was the man who hired men to work for the railroad. "Yes," came the answer from the man. "Could you put a big boy like me to work," inquired Bob. "No," said the man of authority, "We employ no one under twenty-one years of age." At this, Bob removed his hat, thanked the man in authority and departed, taking a wistful look at the iron machine as he passed out.

"Twenty-one years old," thought Bob. "Then it will be eight years before I can secure a position with this man."

As he walked out leaning against a pile of lumber, he was at a loss to know just what to do. Could

he have known then, that when he had grown to be a man he would be riding over this same railroad in the car of the President of the road; that he would be employed by the builder of locomotives and have charge of the installation of new engines on this and other railroads, the picture before him would have been quite different.

Strolling down the road, on his five mile walk home to Mother's cottage in the little village, he noticed a farm wagon on the top of the high bridge. The farmer evidently was unloading bags of wheat into the elevator. The farmer's daughter, about thirteen years of age, was holding the lines fastened to the bits of the bridle of two fiery young horses. As the locomotive, switching cars in the yard near the elevator, started to back and puff with its load, great clouds of smoke went piling high in the air, near the elevator bridge. The young horses took fright, and ran down the inclined bridge, with the plucky girl holding onto the lines with all her might, and her golden hair waving in the breeze.

Bob saw the situation at a glance and fully realized the great peril of this young girl. Being accustomed to horses he was not afraid of the frightened team. He was like all boys at his age, as spry as a cat and his muscles were strong from handling the farmers' sacks in the old mill. Bob's only thought was for the safety of the girl. As the runaway horses reached the ground and were coming toward him he began to run in the direction that the team was coming. As they went to pass him he reached for the harness and the momentum of

his speed lifted him when he landed on the back of the frightened horse.

Right up the main street in the town did they run. He soon had them under control and stopped. The town people saw the fiery runaway horses. Getting into the wagon with the farmer's plucky daughter he turned the horses around and drove back to the depot.

Bob was congratulated by many who saw him catch the young horses who were trembling with fear. Coming up to the farmer Bob handed him the lines, saying, "Your daughter is safe."

"Well, well," said the farmer, "you are a captain of a boy and I thank you with all my heart." Bob looked into the blue eyes of the girl whose life he had saved and an emotion came to his young heart, for she was as pretty as a peach.

Walking up through town, on his journey home, he stopped at the town pump and, reaching over to the side of the building, took down the tin cup and drank of the public water.

The editor of the paper came up to Bob as he had finished drinking and made inquiry as to who he was. This he wrote down on a pad which he held in his hand. Bob strolled off on foot at an easy gate, toward Scott. The five mile walk was an easy task for him.

At the tea table that night as he sat with his mother, he told her of his experience in painting the barn, and how fortunate he had been in being in a position where he could save a young life.

"Well, Robert, you have been well paid after all

for you know that all those who do good will be rewarded." The next day being Saturday, the White Pigeon Journal was printed and gave a full account of the runaway horses, how the frightened team was stopped and the life of the farmer's daughter was saved and "The hero that is entitled to all the honor is but a mere boy, thirteen years old, Bob Royalton, the son of Widow Royalton of Scott."

When Bob read the account of this accident and saw his name in the paper, he felt well paid for making the attempt to save the life of the young girl at the risk of his own.

Bob was determined to make an effort and proposed to strike out and turn up something that would be permanent. He had read of Horace Greeley's advice, which was to "Go West and grow up with the country." He had often heard what chances there were in the Great West, and that, if one would go there and work with a will they would win.

He had no funds to pay his way so far, but that night he planned it all out, just how he could get the money to pay his way.

In those days Barnum, the big show man, did not use railway cars for transporting his circus. He would take them about and lead the big elephants from one town to another, and transport other wild beasts in wagons. It was now July 2d and on the 4th he was billed to show at White Pigeon.

In the early morning Bob had his breakfast and advised his mother that he would go to White Pigeon and try to make some money. He was not

planning on carrying water for the elephants. Arriving at the town, there was a grocery store on the corner of the main street and four corners. He saw Mr. Ellis, the man in charge, sweeping out the store. Bob unfolded the plan which he had in mind, which was to run a lemonade stand in front of his store, selling lemonade, candy, ice cream and soft drinks.

Of course, he did not have one cent in his pocket to invest in the enterprise, the forty cents he made painting the barn, having been used up. He explained to Mr. Ellis that if he would allow him the privilege of the stand and permit him to have the articles he wished to sell, he could check them out to him and also check back the things remaining unsold.

Bob's plan took with the grocery man who admired his push and enterprise and when he learned who Bob was, that he was the boy that stopped the runaway horses and saved the life of the young girl, he could have had a key to his store to help himself.

The morning of the Fourth found Bob well stocked with supplies which he had taken from the store. He checked everything taken out on a piece of paper, as the good man informed Bob that he would leave it to him to check out and bring back what was not sold.

Bob had made a deal with the man who owned the lumber yard to rent for $2.00 enough lumber to erect his stand, cover it over with a roof and have counters on four sides.

The town pump was near by and he thought it would be a fine thing if it failed to pump water on the Fourth, for he had a large barrel of fine lemonade with ice in it and by ten o'clock, when the farmers commenced to come in, he had everything ready for business.

It is natural for boys and girls to play store. Many times do we see little boys and girls on a hot day with a little stand all rigged up, under a shade tree, near their home. The boy crying out "Here it is, here it is, the best lemonade, all stirred up with a spade, colder than the frozen ocean."

His little sweetheart, the neighbor's girl, with golden hair is there for she is his partner. Oh, what joy comes into their young hearts when a customer steps up and pays money for a cool drink, prepared by their little hands.

It is their natural instinct to do something. To earn some money that will be their very own. Thus when they grow up their lives will count for something worth while.

All boys just glory when they can see wild animals and the clowns at a circus but Bob had plans of his very own, while the town boys were at the show, Bob was doing business. Did this business venture pay?

Did it pay well? Yes, Bob was so busy that he had two clerks to help him. It seemed that everyone wanted something which he had to sell, as the day was very hot and dry.

After the show was over, Bob carried what few things there were unsold back into the store. He

had given the grocery man two cigar boxes of money to put in his safe until morning.

Piling some sacks in the corner of the store, he laid down and was soon fast asleep for he was very tired. Bob's mind was so completely filled at the sight of so much money that when he went to sleep, he dreamed of wild animals, elephants, lemonade stands and the crowds of people that patronized him.

The following morning he was up early, taking down and piling up the lumber which he agreed to haul back to the lumber yard.

In every town, there is one man that is bigger than any other man. There was one man in this town that was the big man with a big heart that understood boys. His name was Mr. Wimple, the butcher. He was known all over the township. He did not belong to the trusts and therefore, believed in killing his own cattle which he would buy from the farmers.

When he came to Bob's town, he generally secured Bob to help him kill and dress a calf for his market and, if there was a man in this town that Bob knew better than any other, it was Mr. Wimple, the butcher, the man who could look at a calf and tell how much profit there was inside of its hide for him.

Butchers are always early risers, as it is necessary to have their shops open for trade in the morning. He let Bob have the use of his horse and light wagon to take the lumber back to the yard.

As Bob came up and tied the horse to the post

in front of the shop, he asked, "Bob how much did you make yesterday?" "We haven't divided it yet," said Bob. "What are you going to do now?" said Mr. Wimple. "I have my mind made up to go West, now that I have enough to purchase a ticket." At this, a lady came in for some meat and the conversation closed.

Going over to the store, the merchant had the slip out, checking back what was not sold on Bob's stand. He figured it all up and told Bob that he had made $22.22 and counted this out for Bob, all in silver. When Bob put the silver dollars in his pockets, they bulged out, and, as he started off on foot to Mother's cottage, his heart was light with joy for he had a big surprise for Mother.

Arriving at his mother's cottage home, he walked in with his head up and, all smiles, emptied his pockets bulging with silver on the table; that made a pile large enough to open the eyes of any boy; counting the money he made it $22.22.

Bob was pleased; his soul sang for joy as he counted it over again and again. This venture paid him much better than painting the barn two coats in one day. There is nothing that puts a boy on his mettle like earning his first money. Three days before Bob did not have a cent and the prospects were not good to earn any.

Bob started out with his heart full of hope and with determination he won out. When a boy makes up his mind to do anything, the first thing to do is to imagine how the thing will look after it is completed. Plan it all out first, then throw all of your

will power and energy into the work and the job will be completed as planned.

Before proceeding further we give a hasty review of the early life of two other boys. Bob was not selfish, but always shared with other boys. The father of one of these boys passed on to the golden shore when he was but five years old. He was born on a farm, for the very good reason that in those days there were but few towns to be born in. The mother of this boy had the true American spirit in her, and was dominated with the desire to move her little family West. She sold the small rundown farm for what she could, put a cover on the wagon and started toward the setting sun.

After some traveling over the hills and stony roads, they reached the very small settlement of Jefferson, Ohio. Here they prepared a cabin for a home on the frontier and moved into the log cabin the few things brought along in the covered wagon.

This boy grew up to the age of twelve about as other boys did, who lived in that neighborhood in those early days. Schools had not yet been provided for. Later a district schoolhouse was erected in a settlement ten miles distant. It was constructed of logs taken from the forest, and the seats were made by splitting the logs and hewing them. This boy went to school in the winter, as most farm boys do, and worked on the farm in summer. For three winters he walked ten miles to school and back, facing the cold blasts, as he had an object in view, and that was an education.

When he was fourteen he gave writing lessons in

the schoolhouse and was the boy who taught America to write. He did not follow any set rules but made his own, and developed the Spencerian method of penmanship. Soon he was a school teacher and prepared and issued the Spencerian Copy Book, in use in all American schools later, and which brought him fame and wealth. His name was Herbert Spencer.

After this he was employed as a professor of penmanship at Hiram College, Hiram, Ohio. While there another poor farm boy came to the college seeking an education; he had no rich "dad" to pay his way. History states that his clothing had been patched by his good mother. What did he do? How did he manage to enter this new college? He rang the college bell and swept out the buildings. He was full of determination. Like all the boys who read this, he wanted to make himself a place. Did he win that place? He did, in spite of all the hard pullbacks,—he won the highest honor that could ever come to a boy when grown to manhood.

The American people elected this poor boy to be President of the United States in 1881. He was permitted to occupy this office only six months and fifteen days, however, when he was shot down by Charles J. Guiteau, in the city of Washington. The boy-name of this President, who won his own way to the top, was "Jimmy Garfield." This boy grew to manhood and was loved by all who knew him. To be loved is the instinctive desire of every human heart. To be honored and respected is the ambition of every true American Boy.

It has been well said that our boys are the seed of the nation. Some boys just grow up and become great in spite of all the difficulties that surround them in youth. They manage in some way to cultivate their very own flower garden, and from the flowers derive inspiration, as did this poor boy who taught America to write and as did the poor boy who became President of the United States.

There can never be any possibility of knowing from pen and ink of the bleeding heart of a boy at times who is thrown upon his own responsibility to earn his way through life. Only those who have been compelled to do so have any conception of what this means to a lone boy.

Boys have their ups and downs, as everyone does. If Bob's story in its true aspect and simple structure stimulates juvenile years to greater achievements the author will be pleased. People everywhere share in the glory and efforts of youth, in their mistakes, joy and accomplishments and it is the big part of life to be interested in them.

It is not difficult to trace Bob's genealogy, as from parish records one may discover about his forebears, whose minds and souls strove for good ends as they tilled the soil for their livelihood.

CHAPTER III

T gives a boy inspiration, hope and everything pertaining to his progress and happiness to have a couple of silver dollars in his pocket that are his very own. Money that he has earned with his own hands. Bob was young, but in experience, he was growing into manhood.

His raw-hide boots with red tops and copper toes never seemed to fit him as they did the first morning after he arrived home. There was money in his pocket. Just enough to jingle, for the most of his profits were stored away for a rainy day.

Boys just grow up. Nature gives them life and action, they do things in boy fashion because they are boys. Father was at one time a boy with all the characteristics of a boy. If he did not have these qualifications, he was called a "sissy" among the real boys of his neighborhood.

Where there is a man that may not have had the companionship of his very own boy, he may be inclined to look over the fence at his neighbor's boy with a feeling of contempt for all boys, as he is not able to concentrate on what the life and activities of a live boy really are.

If, with pleasure you are reviewing,
The work that your boy is now doing,
If you really like it, tell him now.
If you do not, then show him how.

It means more than fame and money,
If your words are kind and sunny.
It's to him a real life saver,
And will make him strong and braver.

If the boy commands your praise,
Give it. Do not wait for days.
Don't wait until another time,
Let it help him in his climb.

Give all boys their chance; their opportunity must and will come, therefore give them encouragements and love, no matter whose boy it is, or where he came from. We must remember that the men of this Nation all grew up from mere boys into manhood; that all that has ever come into their lives, was first conceived from boyhood whether your boy or your neighbor's boy.

Bob must now leave all his boy friends at home and requests that when this story is completed, that none of them will forget the plan by which he pulled himself through and up the hills. There are many thousands of boys who have won their own way and there will always be those who will be compelled to do so.

Walking from the house, Bob went down to the saw mill through the log yard. James Dalton was the saw mill man and was interested in Bob. As Bob walked into the mill over the long trestle that held two iron rails supporting the car that brought the logs into the mill and the lumber out, he saw Uncle Jim (as he was called by all who knew him) sitting upon a large walnut log.

The upright saw was making it into inch boards.

Shutting off the water from the wheel, he went down to oil or look after some part of the machinery which he thought was not working right, and when he came back leaned over and took the lever and adjusted the log for another board.

As Bob saw this precious timber cut up in boards, he thought what a waste, for at least one-tenth of the log would be cut up into sawdust and run down the chute to the water below. Bob had read an account of how a man had made a fortune manufacturing all kinds of brackets for the market, from walnut lumber. How he had commenced a poor boy and increased his business until he became very wealthy.

Bob had stored away among his trinkets a catalogue that told about the manufacture of these brackets and giving patterns to cut them by.

It informed the reader that the publisher manufactured and sold the bracket saws which were used for this kind of work. Going back to his mother's cottage he hunted up this catalogue, for he could not be idle. He must be doing something, always working and planning for some end. He concluded he would go into the manufacturing business, and returned to the mill and purchased all the walnut lumber in that big saw log for five dollars. The same lumber would be worth now from $50 to $75.

"Well, Bob," said Uncle Jim, "what is up now?" "Nothing particular. I am just going into the manufacturing business."

"If you wish to use this lumber to manufacture anything it should be piled up in the sun for a

couple of weeks. While the log has been cut perhaps a year, it should have an opportunity to dry out before you use it."

Bob carried the boards from the car into the yard and piled them up edgewise, "criss cross" over a log so the wind as well as the sun would have a good opportunity to dry them.

Bob's mother had a brindle cow. Her name was Cherry. Bob always milked old Cherry and knew well the sound of the bell hanging to the leather strap around her neck.

Cherry was pastured in the big marsh south of the town, that still belonged to Uncle Sam, for no one paid taxes on it, or claimed to own it. All the town cows grazed in this big marsh where lived the bull frogs among the pond lilies.

After school was out each day the town boys gathered and went to the marsh for the cows. In the spring these big marshes were usually flooded with water and some of them the year round.

It was a picture to look at to see those town boys pair themselves off as horses when going for the cows. There would be two, four or eight, holding a rope and the driver at the back with his whip in hand. All the boys had their pants rolled up, as high as they could get them, and of course, all were barefooted, for boys did not wear shoes in that place during the summer months. Some of these boys who galloped away to bring home the family cow have given up life, others have grown to be men, some statesmen, others physicians and others farmers. All who are living, however, can look back to

those times and recall the many pleasures that existed there. That was real happiness to a boy's heart.

The cow that Bob milked and cared for had no regular barn to feed in. There was only a mere shed. Bob concluded he would build a barn for the cow. He believed old Cherry would give more milk if she had a good barn to live in and a real floor to stand on while she ate, and a real manger to fasten her halter chain to. Now it is the joy of any boy's heart to saw off a board and drive it full of nails. Bob had already put a small addition to the cottage in the way of a summer kitchen with a brick chimney running up on the outside, which he built himself.

This chimney had given Bob considerable trouble before he had it really completed. He secured some old brick from Peter Mosher who lived across the narrow street, slacked some lime and secured the sand from the bank of the stream that ran at the back of his mother's town lot. He started the chimney at the bottom on the ground, thinking he would have sufficient brick to carry it two feet above the peak of the summer kitchen.

After he had the brick about two-thirds up, he concluded he would run short and there were no more brick in the town.

To buy brick and pay for the hauling was simply out of the question with Bob so he solved this serious problem in his own way, and after it was finished no one knew what a time the builder had to erect it.

Bob tore down the well put up chimney. It was really done well. He had four plumb bobs fastened to strings with the ends attached above to some framework. No matter how well it was put up, it had to come down and the mortar had to be cleaned off and put back into the mortar-box to be softened up to use again.

Bob built a platform shelf with two braces against the summer kitchen and put it up high enough so he could get in the round hole on the side at the bottom of the chimney for the stove pipe to connect. He now succeeded, as there was plenty of brick to complete the job.

Going to the mill, he talked over the idea with Uncle Jim about building old Cherry a real barn. "Now," said Bob, "there have been five logs piled up against our fence for ever so long, and I don't believe the owner wants them or he would not let them lie there all these years for the worms to bore holes into. The owner may be dead for all I know, so what do you think about them?"

The saw mill man walked over with the boy and concluded, as they had lain there against Bob's fence all these years, that Bob should have them.

Uncle Jim had not forgotten that he was a boy once, and well knew the anxiety Bob felt to build the barn for Cherry, so he said, "You get these logs over on the skid at the mill and I will saw them into boards for you and you can put the lumber into a barn."

To haul logs from their resting place in the yard

to the skids at the mill, the mill company had had the blacksmith build them a very high-wheeled wagon. The back wheels on this mill wagon were ten feet high and the hub was as large as Mrs. Royalton's rain barrel. The spokes were as large as Bob's leg. This big two wheeled wagon had a long beam attached on each side of the wheels, resting on top of its big axle. The other ends, after they extended fifteen feet, came together and were bent down and attached to an ordinary pair of wheels that had a tong pole to which the horses were hitched.

Bob went over to the mill, secured a canthook, and rolled off the two top logs to the ground. He had made a seat on these logs ever since he could remember and there shucked hazel nuts, barked walnuts, and really felt as though those logs belonged to him.

Hitching the mill team to the big wagon, Bob drove around by his home. His mother was sitting at the window sewing. Bob backed the big wheels over the log lying on the outside of the pile and taking the chain down, he measured the log for the middle so it would about balance. After he had it fastened, he climbed up on the top and with a lever worked a cog wheel that wound up the chain. Hauling the logs up to the mill they were soon made into boards and the lumber hauled to the back of the lot where old Cherry's barn was to be erected.

He went to the low land below and cut down four willow trees, trimmed them up, and with the mill team and chain dragged them up to the lot.

Now he dug four holes in the moist ground, for it was very close to running water.

With some help, the willow poles were put in the holes, and he then tramped the dirt well around their lower ends and nailed on some scantling, sawed from one of the logs.

It was after dark when Mrs. Royalton called for him to come into the house. He was so intent upon putting up the barn that the days were not long enough.

Bob borrowed a ladder of Mr. Wise, the blacksmith, a man who usually had everything, and who liked the boy as his own son, for boys he had none.

Climbing up to the top of the pole that was firmly set into the earth, Bob commenced to saw off the top. Now to saw off the top of a green pole, fifteen feet high, standing perpendicularly, with an old rusty saw with the blade half broken, and which had not been filed since he was born, was a job in the construction of that barn that Bob did not forget. This operation took him nearly one whole day. He could but scratch the green pole, and as willow will not split, he used his old rusty hatchet and hacked out a wide furrow so the old saw, well greased with lard from his mother's pantry, would pull back and forth.

After getting these cut off, or rather scratched off, he spiked on the plates. He was sure to have the poles high enough as he had his heart set on having a hay loft sufficiently large to hold a load of hay for Cherry to eat in the winter.

Now he came to that point in his work where the

knowledge of a carpenter would have been useful to him, and that was the sawing of the rafters that were spiked onto these plates for the roof.

What was he to do? How was he to get the rafters sawed so their top ends would meet with just the right slant, so he could spike them together and run them upon the plates? Going to the house he hunted up his arithmetic. In the back part of this book, it told just how to measure rafters so they would go together. Returning to his work with the knowledge he thought was to help him out of trouble, he laid off two rafters, and with the old saw, slanted the top ends and cut out half of the lower ends that were to rest on the plates and the projection for the eaves.

Taking them up to the top where he had some boards laid across the plates to stand on, he nailed them together and hoisted the ends that were to be the top into the air. As the lower ends came down on the plates, the upper ends gaped open wide.

He concluded the man that wrote the arithmetic had made a mistake, and so took them down and sawed them off three different times to get them to fit. Then he took them down and sawed the others by those he had fitted. In about three weeks Bob had the barn completed, the floor and manger in, and feed box for Cherry to eat from.

Uncle Jim, the saw mill man, had watched Bob from the mill day after day as he built the barn. Bob was anxious until he had the outside door of the barn made and hung on leather hinges made

out of a tug from an old discarded harness of one of the mill horses.

He built the stall in the barn and concluded that old Cherry should give more milk and make richer butter with such a nice, warm barn to live in.

A show was to visit White Pigeon and the men who posted bills in the town put a big display poster on Bob's new barn, without his permission while he was up town on an errand for his mother. It had a big picture of a savage lion and other wild animals on it. When Bob returned he saw this and pulled it off, as the paste was fresh. He folded it up to look at again, for every boy likes to look at pictures of wild animals and circus horses.

He went to the marsh as usual to bring Cherry home. This night Bob hurried the old cow pretty fast, as he had a surprise for her and wanted to see how she would like her new home.

Uncle Jim thought his time had come to have a joke on Bob, so he took the display picture of the wild animals and put it up in the old cow's newly made manger.

He knew Bob had everything ready for the reception of Cherry with nice, clean straw on the floor, and he had cut a few stalks of sweet corn from his mother's garden, and put it in the bottom of the manger for a feast for the cow.

Bob came up and opened the door wide and told Cherry to walk into her new home. This she did and appeared to prick up her ears with joy as she entered, walking up into the stall as if proud to have such nice quarters. Poor Cherry no sooner

got into the stall, however, than she raised her head up to the manger and saw a sight that made her cow bell turn wrong side out,—or at least wrong side up—a huge lion looking at her with its mouth wide open.

When Bob was Thirteen Years of Age He Built a Barn for His Mother's Cow "Cherry." The Barn Took Root and Grew into Four Trees.

Out of the stall came the cow, head up and bell flying up and down over her neck, and tail in the air. Bob had not yet entered. He was adjusting the hinges on the door, when old Cherry came out and nearly knocked him down. Well, well, thought Bob,

this is too rich for Cherry, who had run up to the next street and began to bellow as if she had lost her calf.

Bob always treated the cow with kindness and when she saw him coming after her she walked up to meet him.

He took hold of the strap and led her back to the stable door, and by a good deal of persuasion got her in once more, when she came out as before on the run.

Going into the stall, he discovered the cause of poor Cherry's fright. Uncle Jim was hiding near a lumber pile to see the fun, but never told he was the cause of the trouble. Bob took the wild animals out and had to coax Cherry back into the new barn with a pail of bran before he could fasten her in.

In time, after the barn was built, it commenced to grow, climbing up. Bob noticed the door was getting higher, so high that Cherry could not get in, and he had to build a bridge for her to walk up on. He thought the ground had settled and it was a long time before he found the real cause. The posts that were set in the ground were willows. These four posts took root and started in to live, as though never disturbed by an axe, a rusty old hand saw and a boy carpenter.

When Bob returned home after a long absence, he was surprised to see the old barn with branches growing out of the cracks.

Bob now turned his attention to the manufacturing of the walnut lumber he had purchased.

At White Pigeon he secured a second hand foot power bracket saw and rented an old shop directly on Main Street for two dollars a month. He had the lumber hauled up to the shop, put in his small machine and commenced work.

He sawed out and glued together comb cases and towel holders and all kinds of dainty novelties for the household. He put them together in fine shape, using plenty of varnish and they really looked fine. Of course, the log having all been worked up, he was now done with manufacturing, and had his work been confined to this point alone, he no doubt would have built up a good business.

The old settlers, the retired men of the town, called at Bob's shop too often to suit him so he painted a sign and tacked it to the outside door. It read thus: "No loafing around this busy shop."

It was not strange that these men of the town were interested in new manufacturing industries, for that is what builds up a town. The local weekly paper forgot to mention the new industry, for no whistle blew at noon hour from the top of the shop and no black smoke came from the furnace stack. The editor, perhaps, was eating ice cream and smoking ten-cent cigars at his cottage at Klinger Lake, the one most beautiful spot, the gift of nature.

Editors always enjoyed outings, especially in country towns where the subscriptions to the paper was paid in cord wood, potatoes, and such like. The great strain and worry of not knowing what a subscriber might bring in and offer for the payment of

his paper that perhaps is a year overdue, unsettled the editor's nerves and an outing was essential to his recovery.

Bob Royalton had set out to be a manufacturer. He started low, with the lumber of a single log and did all the work himself. It did not require the use of much oil to keep his machinery going, and his rent being cheap, he could see no reason why he would not succeed.

In his shop after three weeks of faithful work there was to be seen hanging from the studding and rafters the fruit of his labor in many manufactured articles. For fear of over-production, he must now shut down and turn his attention to getting them into money, for his cash was becoming extremely low. Bob started out to sell them from house to house and after three days of the hardest work he ever did, returned to his shop footsore and tired, but not altogether a discouraged boy.

The tariff had nothing to do with his goods. He made them and could therefore sell them at any price he chose. He sold only three pieces in three days at twenty-five cents each, bringing him seventy-five cents for three days hard work.

He reasoned it all out, that to sell goods one must be adapted to that art. He had his specialties made so finely and shining so brightly under the glossy varnish that he thought no housewife could resist buying half a dozen, or at least, one. He could find no sale for the goods and concluded to shut down the shop at once. So the next day the shop was closed, the sign taken from the door

and Bob gave his well made novelties to those who would take them.

"More experience," thought Bob. He had made a failure with what he had chosen to do, with one exception, therefore, he longed for another Fourth of July to come.

Bob went to the town pump to get a draught of the cool water, for it was very hot weather. Dan Blue and Ben Houpe were standing at the pump. These men owned large farms west of town, and were well-to-do, straightforward, honorable gentlemen. Mr. Houpe had two kegs of white lead, two cans of boiled oil and a couple of paint brushes in the back of his old-fashioned buggy. Bob looked at these supplies as he had done a little work in that line himself and knew paint and brushes when he saw them.

"Doing some painting?" asked Bob.

"Yes," said Mr. Houpe, "I am going to paint over my big barn."

"Have you hired your painter yet?" asked Bob.

"No," said the farmer.

"Well," said Bob, "I'm just the man you are looking for."

"You a man and a painter, too?"

"I am not a man in age, but I can paint as fast as any man in town," replied Bob.

"It is not a fast painter I want, it is a good one."

"Then I will suit you exactly, for I do my work well."

"How am I to know you can paint?" asked the farmer.

"By my work," said Bob. "And if you will walk up the street, I will show you an old barn that I painted."

"Are you the chap that painted the barn over two coats the same day?"

"I am, Sir."

"You will do," said the farmer. "Get into the buggy and go home with me."

"Well, Sir, I always have an understanding first about the pay. How much will you give per day?" Bob said per day, as he didn't want any more job work just then.

"I will give you seventy-five cents a day and all you can eat."

This made Bob's eyes fairly snap, for he felt quite an emptiness inside of his thirteen-year-old stomach.

Bob had lived very cheaply while in the manufacturing business. He had eaten cheese, crackers and sardines, and slept in the shop on the floor under the work-bench, on the top of the walnut shavings.

All he could eat, thought Bob. He is my man and there and then closed the deal to work for Mr. Houpe.

The next morning as the sun rose over the eastern horizon with a reddish cast, Bob was out in the barn yard, tying two old worn-out ladders together before commencing his work.

At the breakfast table Bob did well. The ham and eggs appeared to put new life into him. The warm coffee and fresh doughnuts, fried the old way,

with a hole in them, tasted just like those his mother made, and he looked forward to the seventy-five cents a day with pleasure, as he had only made that amount in about three weeks.

Bob had the ladders all tied up with clothes lines which he had taken from the posts in the back yard and a piece of chain from the iron kettle hanging to a pole.

The farmer helped him run up the ladder on the gable end, and it was not long before Bob, with brush and paint pail, was climbing up where he could barely reach the cornice.

Eight days' work and the ladder was moved to the gable next the road, as both sides and one gable had been all painted over. The farmer was well pleased. The ladder with its weather beaten rounds was weak and Bob so informed Mr. Houpe. "No danger, no danger," said the farmer. "You are very light and spry as a cat, so if one did break it would not hurt you. You could catch on the next one."

The ladder was adjusted to the front gable of the barn. Taking an old broom, Bob ascended the ladder to sweep the cobwebs before he began to brighten up this end of the barn with the red paint. As he stepped on the third round from the top, reaching his broom over his head, the ladder broke, and down he fell, twenty feet to the ground below.

Luckily, there was a little straw lying upon the ground, or perhaps Bob would have been killed.

Mrs. Houpe was, at this moment, spreading her milk pans out in the sun on the top of an old box near the garden fence, and she heard the crash and

ran to Bob's assistance. Seeing that she could not pick him up, she tapped the old dinner bell hanging to its weather beaten pole. This brought Mr. Houpe to the house at once, for the bell was rung twice with a few seconds intervening, which was a signal at farm houses to let the male members of the family who are working in the field know that something was the matter at the house and they were to come with all haste.

In the fall, Bob was stunned and his body bruised, but being well developed, he was on the plan of an India rubber ball. The fall laid him up for about a week.

Now Bob was not a bad boy at all. His intentions were always good and never in his life was he known to pick a quarrel with any other boy. He was not the kind of a boy that robbed the birds of their eggs and tore down the nests that had taken them weeks to build. His Christian mother had taught him to do right and he knew when Sunday morning came what was to be done that day. He was to be found in the Sunday school class and it mattered not to him whether he had shoes to wear or not.

He was sure to be there with his bare feet attached to a pair of limbs not yet long enough to reach the floor.

After he had been carried into the farm house and placed on a bed over the kitchen, he realized that he had come near losing his life, and thanked God for saving it for him. Bob never retired at night without kneeling down at his bedside and thanking

his Heavenly Father for the life He gave him, and asking Him to make him better, that he might live to do good to others.

One of Bob's strong points was to do good, and no one ever heard him take the name of his God in vain. He shunned bad boys. He was never mixed up in anything that was wrong. While he was growing up, nearly alone in the world, for he was away from his mother most of the time, he knew right from wrong.

Bob's painting had terminated badly. He believed that his first job, which was a contract and a failure, was to be a warning to him to let bristles on a handle alone. Now he was convinced more than ever that he would not do as a painter.

He soon recovered sufficiently to go down to his old home and see his mother.

The farmer purchased a new ladder and he finished the painting himself, as being a very heavy man, he did not care to trust a ladder that was past holding a boy.

Bob came out of the house, and wishing to prove to Mr. Houpe that he was really all he claimed to be, he suggested to the farmer that his name should be painted upon the big barn, for it was visible for miles over the White Pigeon prairie.

Taking a small brush and a pail of white paint, Bob climbed cautiously up the rounds of the new ladder to the center of the gable. Just under the window lattice, he painted the name of Benjamin Houpe.

Twenty years later, when Bob was visiting the

old home, he went out to this farm, and there saw the name of the good farmer, who had long since passed on.

Bob now decided to carry out his plan and go West. Not bred to any trade, his head began to be filled with rambling thoughts. When he returned to his home, he found his mother busy as usual with her sewing. He had often heard glowing accounts of the far West, as it was discussed in the one-horse store.

He believed his chances would be better in the West than they were at his old home, and that now was the time to make the start. This was the first night at home for some time. Bob and his mother talked over the events of their lives and what they thought was the best for the future.

He finally persuaded his mother to let him make the trip and, while she disliked his going, she helped him pack what few clothes he had into a carpet bag, with a few other things she knew would come handy.

He had always been a diligent boy; indeed, there was little chance to be otherwise. In those days, everyone worked. Industry was taught on every hand both by example and precept.

Bob found himself poorly prepared to face the big world alone, having only a few dollars and most of this would go for railroad fare. He concluded that St. Paul, Minnesota, was about the jumping-off place, and that he would make his first stop at the capital city of the Great North Star State.

CHAPTER IV

HE time arrived for Bob's departure. From ten to fifteen, a boy is in the making of a man. Before him on every side are suggestion, adventure and romance. He is ready to try anything. Bob was going out among the Indians and buffaloes and where the wolves were desperate on the plains of the West.

Bidding good-bye to Mother and friends, he now made a start for a new country and launched his young vessel on the windy waves of the great Northwest. He watched every opportunity to make a dollar. When the opportunities did not come, he made them. Dreams of the wild plains entered his young brain. He would now have a chance to see the red men and the buffaloes.

There was no backing out, or giving up anything that he had planned to do. The railway train pulled into White Pigeon and stopped, the sharp whistle from the air brakes as they loosened the smoking brake shoes from the round iron wheels, the big locomotive standing still, panting like the breath of life, waiting for the signal to be off. The brass bell upon the iron stand was sending forth its music. The smoke rolling from the engine stack filled the fresh country air. It was nothing new

for Bob to see a railway train come and go from the station, but it was a new sensation to ride aboard one.

This day Bob felt differently from what he had ever felt before when the train came into the depot. The conductor called "All aboard" and Bob, with his canvas bag and ticket in his pocket for St. Paul, stepped on board of a railway train for the first time in his life. With a last backward look he was soon speeding away westward toward the land of the red man.

Bob hastily glanced over the past as he sat in the well-upholstered, red plush seat of the railway coach. How clearly he could picture the little cottage home he had so recently left, its location near the river by the mill, where he had fished and swam with the other town boys.

This little home to him was the dearest spot on earth. He did not then realize what a truly sacred spot it was. Boys soon grow up to be men, come into contact with the ups and downs of the busy world, and lose all remembrance of the home where they, as barefoot boys, roamed through the fields, chasing butterflies and bumble bees, with light hearts, with no thought of the great problems they must solve in the future.

This was Bob's cottage home. Its floors were covered with rag carpets and rugs made by his mother's hands. He remembered all the joys and sorrows that had come to him and to his mother in that little home, as he struggled on from day to day. In imagination, we can almost see Mrs. Royal-

ton sitting at her sewing table, stitching and planning for the future.

When Bob worked upon the farm, the horses that he drove to the plow always had an opportunity to breathe when the railroad train was passing by. He loved to watch the iron monster. It seemed to call to him to come. It seemed to fly, as the birds of the air, skimming over the valleys, rounding the hills, crossing the bridges with a roar, on and on it would roll.

Now, this iron steed, the dream of his wakeful nights, was taking him through the country at the rate of sixty miles an hour. Looking out of the windows of this magnificent car, Bob could see the farm houses, the fields of beautiful grain nearly ready for the reaper. It was certainly a new and novel situation for the young country boy, to sit in this beautiful train skimming westward. Not a jar could be felt, nothing heard but the hum of the flying wheels as they rolled over the heavy steel.

Arriving in Chicago, the great city of the West the train pulled into the big depot and Bob alighted and followed the crowd to the exit, where he was directed to enter the bus by the checkman, who tore off a part of his ticket for the ride to the other depot, where he was to take the train for the West.

The bus started, and in it was little Bob with his carpet bag. Oh! how tall the buildings looked to this boy from the farm. Scott was really the best place in Bob's mind that he had ever seen. He now thought that Chicago covered the earth and he would never see farms and fields again.

After a ride over the stony pavement and listening to the noisiest noise he had ever heard, the bus stopped at the depot.

Bob was simply astonished at the grandeur he saw in this magnificent depot, with the tall, large pillars of solid marble. He was lost in dreamland, gazing on these wonderful sights, when he heard a loud voice call out the train that was to carry him West, a voice that echoed around the tall marble posts and rolled down from the high ceiling of glittering lights. Bob, taking up his canvas bag, followed the big crowd, coming up to the door, that was reached by passing between two brass railings.

At the door a tall man with blue uniform punched a hole in his ticket. Passing seven long, well-lighted cars, Bob came up to the locomotive.

"Hello, sonny," said the big, black-eyed driver as he set down the oil can and lighted torch in the gang-way of the engine. "Which way are you traveling?"

"Going West," said Bob.

"Going West? Are you alone?"

"Yes," said Bob, "I am alone."

"Well," said the engineer, "you are a young boy to be going West and alone."

"That may be," said he, "but I am going just the same. Are you the man that runs that engine?"

"That I am, boy."

At this the conductor came forward to compare the time with the engineer.

"You had better get aboard," said the conductor, a tall man, with long, smooth, black hair, whose

shoulders were inclined to droop, perhaps by coming into contact with the ups and downs of his years of experience upon the rail. He held in his hand a nickel-plated lantern. His uniform trimmed with gold braid, fitted him like a general's. A neat cap was on his round, well-shaped head, and while he looked dignified enough to be the President of the company, he and the engineer, a fine looking man also, were the men, Bob knew, the public looked to for safety in railway travel.

Walking back to the coach, Bob stepped upon the platform, and heard the "All aboard" and the lantern in the conductor's hand gave a signal to the engineer. Entering the car, Bob saw each seat had two passengers. "Others going West," he thought and when he had found a seat in the ladies' coach the train was under way, pulling out through the big yard, past the red, white and blue lights, all of which made a grand picture in the eyes of Bob, the young boy from the farm.

He was now off for a night's ride toward the great Mississippi River. He had read about the buffaloes, Indians, and jack rabbits with long ears, that could run as fast as a railway train. He could tell by passing lights in the farm houses that the train was rolling over the polished steel like a cannon ball. He had seen the engineer and thought he looked fierce and brave.

Those big iron driving wheels, standing twice as high as Bob's body were now rolling through space as fast as the great power of steam could propel them. Bob did not feel one bit uneasy. His

mother had warned him to sit very quietly while the train was in motion, and be sure and not fall out of the car window.

The night was dark, like a poet's midnight. No streaks of grey were visible in the sky from the car window. On they rolled, Bob knew not how fast. He only knew the train was going as smoothly as grease, and aside from the hum of the iron wheels beneath the car floor there was nothing to show they were rolling at what he thought was almost lightning speed.

He would not have known but that he was in his mother's cottage home at this moment, had it not been for the name of the three great western cities painted on the outside of the cars which he read as he entered the train: Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul.

It was not long before his tired eyes became sleepy. Many of the passengers were already snoring, others had their shoes removed, their feet covered with yarn socks, sticking out from the seats. Arranging his carpet bag under his head, he was soon fast asleep. The new sights had made his tired brain whirl.

Not until a brakeman with a small voice shook his arm and called out "St. Paul" did he realize that he was near the journey's end.

Leaving the train, he proceeded up town with his carpet bag which contained his all. St. Paul did not appear to Bob as the "jumping-off place," as it was a beautiful, growing city. He looked around for a boarding house, where he secured lodging for

a week and then started out to see what he could turn up. He found things different in the western city from what he had anticipated when he left home.

There were so many people. It appeared to him there were a dozen for every place and he found this surmise to be correct when he applied for work.

A large city appears to a young country boy on his first visit as something wonderful. He walked and walked the well-paved streets, wondering as only a boy can, who is alone and far away in a western city.

He was confident that he could get no barns to paint, and opening up a lemonade stand was simply out of the question. Here he met problems that did not come to him in the small village. There seemed to be a colder feeling among those he asked for work than he was accustomed to. He found out that boys were in no greater demand in St. Paul than they were at the old home.

When he returned to his own room, and knelt down by the bedside before retiring, he looked over the situation.

Surely there was something coming over him that he had not felt before. What was it? He was thinking of Mother a great deal oftener the second day than he had the first.

When he was refused work at one place he sought for it at another. Although he felt homesick, he did not dare pen a line of this to his mother, to whom he wrote glowing accounts of this great city,

located on the father of waters, the largest river in the country.

He was getting more accustomed to being away from home as each day passed. His money was getting less and less, and this worried him a great deal. A few days hustling, with no results, naturally made him feel that he had left the train at the wrong station. He knew he must make a strike soon, or he would be left penniless.

He was now nearly fourteen years old but was large for his age. This was no doubt what induced Mr. Rice, the Division Superintendent of the St. Paul & Pacific Railway, now the Great Northern Railway, to give him a position as water boy on a gravel train that was to be put on at Breckenridge, Minnesota.

He was instructed to report for orders in the morning at the superintendent's office. That night when he entered his small room he felt like a new boy. He counted over his money and found that he had but little, but his board was paid. "Well," thought Bob, "this is not so bad, there is always a beginning, and I am now making mine.

"I am going to enter the service of a railway company, and realize the dream of my life." The position of carrying water for the men who shoveled gravel was as important to him as any position he could have received.

When he called at the superintendent's office at seven A.M. the following day, he was informed that the crew of the gravel train would have but one brakeman, and that they would have to take a

train with them from St. Paul to Breckenridge. Bob was asked by the clerk in the office if he would ride ahead on the locomotive and help out as head brakeman, until they reached Breckenridge.

"I will do what I can," said Bob, "although I know nothing about what the duties are."

"Never mind," said the clerk, "the engineer and fireman will tell you what to do." The clerk gave Bob a switch key and lantern. Why should he not feel that he was highly honored? Certainly to carry a switch key to the locks of this big road was in itself an important position!

Bob's hopes were climbing high. He would do the right thing and he would soon get up higher on the ladder of railway fame.

If he could have foreseen the immediate future he would not have made the undertaking, as his bright hopes were of but twelve hours duration. He soon had to feel as if he had ruined a whole railroad while he was obeying orders from his conductor.

The engines on this road at this time were all wood burners. The engine came backing down from the roundhouse into the freight yard. She looked like a load of wood on wheels, so high was the wood piled. The conductor coupled the iron horse to the freight cars and giving the engineer running orders and instructions, told Bob, whom he called "Kid," to ride ahead and see that it did not break loose.

Then, stepping up into the cab, Bob saw the fireman filling the huge firebox with large sticks

before the start was made, as there was a hill to pull upon, leaving the city.

"Well, kid," said the fireman, "are you the head shack?"

"I don't know what I am to be," said Bob. "I was never on a train of this kind before."

"Well, you sit upon this seat of mine and ring the bell and watch the switches and the caboose for awhile, until I want to use you."

Two sharp reports of the whistle and the engine began to move forward with her load. "Ring that bell, kid," said the fireman to Bob. As Bob pulled the bell rope the huge brass bell commenced to send forth its sound. The vibration seemed to run back through the bell rope and enter Bob's very soul. He felt like a man watching the great wheels go round. He was entering a new world. The smoke puffing out of the stack at every exhaust was as regular as the beat of his own heart.

The fireman now commenced to instruct Bob as to his duties. One was to stand in the tank and pass him the wood as he required it for the firebox. Bob was young but strong and thought nothing of this work at first. Not until he and the brakeman had loaded on about a dozen tank loads from the ditch and handed it to the fireman, did he begin to feel tired. He kept well at the work until his tender fingers were worn through at the ends.

The engineer requested Bob to go back to the caboose, the conductor's car, and ask the loan of his key to wind up the steam gauge on the boiler. Bob looked somewhat green, no doubt, and not until

the fireman facetiously requested him to go back to the caboose for some red oil and a left-handed monkey wrench did he tell them they were on the wrong scent. Driving a pair of horses before a plow gave Bob no opportunity to become familiar with a railway train, but he knew that it took water and fire to wind up the steam gauge on the boiler, that red lights did not require red oil to make them burn red, and that any monkey wrench was left or right handed.

They arrived at Breckenridge the following morning about three o'clock. They were using a baggage car for a caboose, which was uncoupled as the train came to a stand on the main track in front of the station. After the train was pulled down and pushed into a long siding, the engine came back for the caboose, and was coupled on by the brakeman.

There were but two side tracks there at this time. The conductor and Bob were on the rear end of the car as they pulled down the main track.

The conductor said: "Kid, you get off at the first switch and throw it for the siding. Allow the car to run in, then throw it back quick, allowing the engine to pass up the main track to the round-house."

Hanging onto the lower step with the lantern on his arm, Bob dropped off as they passed over a switch. It being very dark, nothing could be seen beyond the light of his smoky lamp globe. He unlocked the brass switch lock with the key, given him by the clerk of the superintendent.

The engine and car passed down the track for some distance, as they intended to give the car a good start so it would run of its own momentum up to the station house. Bob gave a signal to the conductor, who gave one to the engineer. With a rush, the car came flying up the track to its doom, while the conductor stood on the rear end, holding the iron brake wheel in his hand.

The trackmen had only recently put in the switch which fact was unknown to the conductor, who had instructed Bob to throw the first one he came to. This had but three rails fastened together. The car turned a complete somersault with the rear end reversed and turned over on its side.

The conductor saw the mistake as the car turned into the siding and jumped, unhurt, into the soft earth. He came up uttering oaths that made Bob's hair stand. He wired back to headquarters that the accident was caused by the kid of a brakeman not throwing the right switch.

Bob supposed the whole road was done for and was very much frightened, and concluded he did not want to be water boy on that train.

After breakfast at a small lunch counter, Bob walked over to the depot just as the passenger train was leaving for St. Paul and stepped on board to return to the city.

This was an experience Bob had not dreamed of back in the small village in Indiana. All his hopes, he felt had come to a sudden ending. He was certain that he had made a mistake in accepting the position.

Alighting at St. Paul, he entered the superintendent's office, put his lantern down on the inside of the door and laid his switch key on the desk of the clerk, and walked out. Seeing a train starting for the West he boarded it. When the brakeman came through the car, Bob asked him the destination of the train.

"Sioux City, Iowa," was the answer.

Bob only stayed in Sioux City long enough to change cars. He concluded to go through to the state of Nebraska. His father had a brother living not far from Beatrice, Nebraska. He decided to go to that place and see if he could get work.

It had been a number of years since Bob had seen his uncle, who had gone West in a covered wagon, and taken up some of Uncle Sam's land on the wild prairies of Nebraska. At Lincoln, he was to change cars and take the train for Beatrice. He was pretty hungry, so stopped at Lincoln to get something to eat and look for work. It was the story that he had heard before, he was either too young or too small.

Being in this western prairie town alone, without a friend and having but little with which to purchase necessities, he went back to the station platform and sat down upon the rough boards with his feet hanging down upon the steel rails of the railroad track.

He was a little homesick, a little down-hearted. He confessed to himself that he would like to step into his mother's cottage and put his arms about her neck and tell her how much he loved her.

There were many thoughts of home rushing through his young brain.

He could see the old mill, the creek that ran so near the house, the boat he had made with his own hands, his fish pole and line. He could call up all these things in his imagination as he sat there meditating upon what he should do next.

He looked across to a long corn crib well filled with big, yellow ears of golden grain. "Well," thought Bob, "if I can't find work I know I can live, for in this part of the country, the corn cribs appear to be pretty well filled."

The sun was well up in the eastern horizon, sending forth its quivering rays over the vast prairie. As he sat there meditating, he heard a sharp, shrill whistle from the north announcing the approach of a train.

As the train drew into the station, the engine stopped at the big tank for water and, while the fireman was filling the engine tank, the conductor came down from the top of the cars and walked into the telegraph office to see if there was any freight to go south. Bob spoke to the man and asked him for a ride to Beatrice.

"Have you any money for a ticket?" asked the conductor.

"I have but fifty cents left," said Bob, "I would not like to give that up, as I will need something to eat."

"You can go back to the caboose and ride with me when we start."

Bob thanked his new friend for giving him a lift

and when the train started he was in the caboose with the kind-hearted conductor.

Again the train rolled along over the vast prairie carrying Bob farther and farther away from his old home. He felt a feeling of gratitude that he was permitted to ride to where he was in the hopes of finding friends.

"Give up? No, never," said Bob. "Not as long as there is life. There is an opening for me and I will get it presently." One of Bob's choicest gifts was cheerfulness. He always looked on the bright side of life. When he planned and found he could not make it go as he had arranged to do, he passed it all by saying: "Well, perhaps it was all for the best that I could not do as I intended." He had the mettle in him that sticks to it and is sure to land one somewhere and usually on top. He had the consolation that he had not attempted to steal a ride, but was honestly entitled to his transportation.

When the engineer pulled the whistle announcing the arrival at Beatrice, then a very small village on the bank of the big Blue River, Bob was pleased and full of hope as usual for the future.

He believed with boyish enthusiasm, this was the place he had been trying to reach all the time, and stopping at St. Paul had only delayed him. Courage is the one admirable quality which inspires a growing boy to push right on, till he succeeds. That same spirit is required as we advance in years as well.

Bob's boyhood dreams had been nurtured by

coming in contact with the great out-door, the hills, the woods, the streams, and now to behold the great prairie, a great love for nature developed still more, in his young soul.

Bob reached Beatrice about 2 P.M., and purchased his dinner in a small wood-colored building near the depot, which left him but twenty-five cents —all the funds he possessed. Taking his carpet bag he proceeded to the village post office. There were miles and miles of wild prairie covered with buffalo grass. As far as eye could see, nothing but space, the home of the jack rabbits, wolves and prairie chickens.

Bob entered the post office, which was in a general store, to make inquiry about his uncle. He knew that he must make a strike very soon as he had only the price of one meal left, which was not much to sustain the spirits of a boy out on the plains alone so far from home.

He inquired from the Postmaster if he knew his uncle. "Well, boy, there is a man who gets his mail here by that name, but I am not much acquainted with him, as he seldom comes in here."

"Do you know which direction he lives from here?" asked Bob.

"I do not," said the man in the employ of Uncle Sam, "but I believe that he comes into town from the east and if you follow the road far enough, you will no doubt find him."

Coming out of the post office, Bob sat down on the steps and with a lead pencil wrote a short letter to his mother. Putting a stamp that he had in his

pocket on it, he deposited the letter in the office. He wanted her to know where he was, that he was well and, above all, hopeful.

After mailing the letter, he stood on the steps surveying the situation, and concluded he would start on foot. The road led out upon a vast tract of land with not a tree in sight.

Picking up a stick he put it through the handle of the carpet bag with one end resting upon his shoulder as shown in illustration. Again Bob started on another attempt to win success. He walked and walked over that well-beaten road and wondered how it was that the world was so big.

Where people would one day have homes there was nothing to be seen but the green velvet over the vast space of nature.

Hour after hour passed. The little prairie town was farther and farther behind him, and the day so bright, the day that he had expected would bring him joy and happiness, was drawing to a close. The sun had seemed to touch the earth as it looked over the western horizon. The day's work was about ended and where was he? Miles and miles from home.

Bob began to grow weary from his long walk. He could see no signs of human life in any direction. He could hear the prairie chickens calling to one another. Now and then a savage-looking wolf or coyote came sniffing toward him looking for some food to satisfy its hunger.

When Bob fully realized that it might be possible that he would be compelled to spend the night on

that vast prairie he began to be somewhat sick at heart as he took in the situation. He now felt a hot sensation on his cheeks as he began to think of home—back in the village of his boyhood.

He soon rallied from this feeling of homesickness and loneliness, however, as he knew it would be foolish for him to show the white feather now. He was not that kind. When Bob Royalton gave up, there was no use of anyone else trying.

The magic of the glorious West thrilled young America in the early pioneer days with the dawn of a new day, which took hold of our forefathers who were called the tenderfeet of the East as they moved Westward over the Plains in long Covered Wagon trains, toward the setting sun, with a proud spirit to do or die.

The footprints of those brave pioneers left their tracks across the plains. They were the trail blazers and pathfinders for the Golden West, over a land that belonged to Uncle Sam, inhabited by the untamed Indians, the buffalo and savage wolves. Yes, Uncle Sam owned and controlled this big domain in a legacy, a joint estate, that would descend to unborn generations.

Bob with his carpet bag over his shoulder, was now walking over one of these important Western trails, over which the Covered Wagon trains of the East were passing daily. Yes, just a boy out on the plains, in a strange land, among the wolves and jack rabbits alone.

He had provided his will power and determination with an atmosphere from his young soul, where

it would live and grow. It was this very thing that was prompting him on, pushing him forward. The great blue sky over his head was hanging out her curtains for the night, in lowering clouds, as the interesting day was about to close.

On he tramped over the long dusty prairie road that apparently had no end. The sun had disappeared, leaving a reddened sky behind it. Bob was anxious to see some signs of human habitation, some house where he could inquire where his uncle lived. On looking around he saw in the distance a cloud of dust rising out of the road and spreading over the grass. This nerved him and put new life into his tired soul, and weary limbs. He knew someone was coming and he might get a chance to inquire, also obtain a ride.

Bob did not have long to wait before the horses, with their driver and a farm wagon overtook him. They were now near him, rounding a small hollow in the prairie road. Bob could read the maker's name on the side of the green box. He felt new life spring into his very soul as the driver pulled up the horses and asked him to take a ride.

Bob accepted this invitation, and as they drove on he asked the driver if he knew a man by the name of W. W. Royalton. He replied he had heard of him quite often and that he lived not far from his place. Bob soon noticed the man asked him a number of questions and appeared to take great interest in what he told him.

Presently the horses turned from the main road

and pulled up in front of a small sod house. A bright light was shining out of the front windows and the farmer's wife could be seen moving about the stove, preparing the evening meal for her hungry husband.

"Well, boy," said the farmer, "it is already too dark for you to proceed further tonight and it is out of the question. You see the wolves are plenty and they are dangerous after dark, so you had better stay with us tonight and in the morning you can see about continuing your journey."

Bob did not for one moment hesitate to accept the offer. He helped the farmer unhitch the horses and made himself useful doing chores. He had been accustomed to taking care of stock, and, when the farmer brought out two milk pails, Bob took one and walked promptly up to one of the cows in the corral and told her to "hist." He could milk a cow or paint a barn. It made no difference to him.

As he milked the pure white fluid, he longed to have a good draught of it, for he was hungry after his long walk.

The chores being done up for the night, Bob walked toward the sod house with the farmer and entered. Here he saw a tall woman with deep black eyes and hair to match. She was arranging on the table the food that had been cooked perhaps for over an hour.

"Wife, I have a boy here that is looking for a friend up the country, and as it is so late and he walked all the way, I invited him to stay with us tonight, as you know it would not do for a man to

be out alone on the prairies after night, and much worse for a boy."

"Certainly," said the wife. "Boy, you may wash out of the wash basin on the bench at the well. You look tired and hungry. I have plenty cooked and you will feel better after you have had your supper."

The lady poured out a big bowl of the rich milk, after she had run it through a strainer, and set this down at Bob's plate. This, of course, made Bob's eyes sparkle. He concluded that the farmer and his hospitable wife were the right kind of people.

He had often heard the men in the little one-horse store in his home town tell how the prairie farmers built their sod houses, but this was his first opportunity to see the inside of one.

Bob noticed, while they were eating, that these people were interested in him and asked him all kinds of questions about Indiana. After the meal was over the farmer put on his glasses to look over a couple of letters and a paper that he had received at the post office that day before starting home.

When the dishes were washed Bob stepped up to the table and took the dish towel and commenced to wipe the dishes.

"I can do that," said the woman.

"So can I," said Bob, "I often did it for my mother and I will help you."

When the kitchen, which was used also for a sitting room, had been tidied up, the table moved back into the corner by the flour barrel, they all gathered around the fire as the night was chilly.

The fire was kept burning by using corn on the cob for fuel. Opening the lid, the farmer threw in a few ears of corn to liven up the fire.

Said Bob, "What do you do that for? That looks extravagant, burning that corn."

"You see wood is not to be had at all, and corn is worth but thirty cents per bushel, being much cheaper than coal and goes further," was the answer.

Bob thought this strange. He had seen many things that looked strange to him since he had left his old home. He was soon spinning his tale to these people. How he had left his mother and come West to better their condition. How he had lost his father in the great war, and that he made his own living. That he had decided to hunt up his uncle, and try to get work from someone. He regretted very much that he was not able to reach his uncle's place that night and was thankful to them for giving him shelter for the night.

Bob noticed the tears streaming down the cheeks of the kind woman, who arose and came to him. Putting her arms around him, she said, "Robert, you are in your uncle's house, and I am your Aunt Julia."

Bob was so overjoyed he could not speak, and from his soft blue eyes, large tear drops came which ran down on his cheeks.

When this story of Bob and his Covered Wagon is published, the reader may imagine but can never know, never realize the emotion that is felt in a lonely heart by a young boy who is compelled to struggle alone, among strangers.

The author pens a silent prayer, that the God of the great universe will ever give His love and protection to our boys who are compelled, by misfortune, to face the big world alone; that He will give them determination to fight on and up.

We know there is some unseen force, that ever drives a boy on who is determined to win. Mothers, your prayers will follow your boy through to the end of his life. For, the boy who starts out alone with the prayers of his mother can never fail. He may make mistakes, but instantly he is back on the trail for another try, this time he wins, for it is the mothers that make our boys and KEEP THE FAITH OF THE WORLD ALIVE.

"Well, Bob, I see you are surprised. I was looking for you on the road. You see I took a load of corn to the Village and when I called at the post office and inquired for my mail, the postmaster informed me that a boy with a carpet sack had called there and inquired for me, telling him that I was his uncle.

"I had some work for the blacksmith and so did not start for home until at least two hours after you."

Bob admitted that he was growing a little lonesome before his uncle overtook him, but that had all vanished now. He was very happy to know that he was among friends.

If there is anything that can be properly called sacred, it is the love ties of mutual affection and service between parents and their children, for it

is the thing called love that cannot be bought or substituted. Love is the greatest driving force, because it comes from the heart and levels everything before it.

Bob's uncle had gone West some years previous to this time, driving his horses hitched to a covered wagon. He purchased from the government one hundred and sixty acres; a quarter section of land, the finest kind of soil for raising crops. He had some of this broken, and was striving between drouth and grasshoppers to make a go of it.

It was hard work those days for the early settlers to make ends meet, as corn was more profitable to use for fuel than it was to sell.

Bob's uncle, this afternoon, had received a letter from a friend of his back in the state of Indiana who had purchased a quarter section of land near his. He wanted him to secure someone to break sixty acres of this wild land, and he would send him the money to pay for it as soon as the work was done. So read the letter. The price paid for this kind of work was three dollars per acre. This would make a sum of one hundred and eighty dollars.

"It would be next to impossible to secure anyone around here to do this work," said his wife, "for each farmer has all he can do to break his own land."

There was an old-fashioned lounge on one side of the room, and Bob's aunt fixed him up a bed there for the night, and advised her husband to come into the other room, which was used for a sleeping room.

"Bob is tired and I know he feels sleepy, so we will retire for the night."

As Bob knelt down before the little bed, he offered up there, from his heart, words of thanksgiving to God. Lying down upon his bed and drawing the covers about him, he expected to soon be fast asleep. This he could not do, as sleep was out of the question.

He had heard his uncle read the letter from Indiana and it greatly interested him. That one hundred and eighty dollars was ringing in his ears. Bob always decided upon his pillow. When he was about to undertake anything, he usually slept over it, or waited until he had retired before deciding positively. He finally decided to break the prairie. How it was to be done, he would decide in the morning.

On arising in the morning, he informed his uncle that he had decided to break the prairie. "Well, that's good. Have you sufficient money with which to purchase a team?"

Bob thought of his last twenty-five cents in his pocket, and informed his uncle that he had not.

"Well, Bob, I have but three horses and I use them myself." "This I know," said Bob. "But are there not some neighbors who have horses to sell?"

"Neighbors? Well, boy, the nearest is about three miles from here. I do not know what he has, but I know, Bob, that if you have no money you cannot buy horses, neighbors or no neighbors."

"Well," said Bob, "I don't know. I'll find that out as soon as I see your neighbor.

"If you will allow me the use of one of your horses, I will ride over and have a talk with your three-mile neighbor."

"Why, certainly," said Bob's uncle, and he went out to the barn that had been built by setting posts in the ground, and a few scattered lengthwise over the top and these covered with straw.

Leading out a large brown mare with a white face and four white "stockings," he handed Bob the bridle strap. Taking hold of one of Bob's feet, he lifted him up on the round back of the faithful horse.

"I don't suppose that it will be necessary to take along a pair of halters," said Bob's uncle.

"No," said Bob, "in this case, I will catch the bird first, then arrange for the cage."

"NOW, UNCLE, I MEAN BUSINESS. I am going to buy a team and I'm going to break that prairie, and the money will be forwarded and the team will be paid for. I am determined to put this thing across, and if I don't I will take my grip and start on farther west."

"Well, Bob, you know that confidence is the main thing and I am pleased that you have confidence in yourself to make a go of this undertaking."

Pointing over the tall buffalo grass, his uncle told him to go directly south over the prairie. The sun was well up in the east and there were a few white clouds to be seen in the beautiful sky. Going over the green carpet, Bob thought how beautiful nature appeared. How sweet life really was, for all its trials and disappointments.

Those difficulties that came to Bob only appeared to stimulate and urge him on with new life and hope. He never brooded or lamented over the past. That which was over was gone. The future was with him, and it looked bright and cheerful.

Bob did not urge his horse faster than a walk. The wolves and coyotes and other animals had roamed over that vast area for ages. Their homes were under the ground and their entrances were deep and large and it required caution on his part to keep his horse from stepping into these holes where the grass had not been burned.

He had decided the night before to break the prairie. He knew that he had not an encouraging prospect to secure a pair of horses, but he was determined to see what he could do. It was not long now before he could see in the distance a house and barn and a large windmill, whirling in the gentle breeze. He had enjoyed his ride. He saw many wolves and prairie chickens, and it well paid him for his trouble in riding over to have an interview with the farmer.

Coming to the yard, he saw a man taking off one of the hind wheels of a farm wagon and was about putting on some grease. Bob raised his cap and said "Good morning, Sir."

The man appeared to be about sixty years old, with grey hair and whiskers. His blue eyes were deep set, under a pair of heavy eyebrows. Looking up, he said, "Good morning, boy." Bob jumped down from his horse and tied it to the end of the rod that held in the end gate of the wagon.

Bob commencing the conversation said, "Do all Nebraska farmers use the same make of wagon?"

"That I don't know, but I do know that this is one of the best of makes. Why I bought this wagon more than ten years ago back in the States, and it carried my wife and two babies over fifteen hundred miles to this very spot, and I have been using it ever since, and it appears to be good for a long time yet."

"My uncle has one of the same make," said the lad.

"Your uncle, and who is he?" asked the farmer.

"W. W. Royalton," said Bob.

"Yes, I have heard of him. He lives over north about three miles?"

"Yes, that is he. It seems strange to me that farmers in this country don't know their own neighbors," said Bob.

"Not at all," said the farmer. "You see the country is but thinly settled, and the farmers that are here are not the kind that run around. They are the kind that work."

"I have just come out here from Indiana," said the boy.

"Indiana? I am a Hoosier, myself," said the farmer, "I came from the central part of the State."

"Anywhere near Posey County, Hoop Pole Township?" inquired Bob.

"Not exactly," was the reply, "but I reckon there were some hoop poles near where I was raised, at least my dad could find one as often as I did not walk the mark."

Looking over in the yard, Bob saw some young horses near an old straw stack. He was feeling his way as he wished to be sure of his ground before he inquired if he had horses for sale.

Bob told him that his father gave up his life in the 88th Indiana Volunteers, and that his mother was a widow, that he came out here to get started into something that would be profitable, and told about the letter his uncle had received the day before. The farmer was a kind-hearted man, and, leaning up against the wagon, studied Bob with a good deal of interest.

Bob was anxious not to make the old gentleman acquainted with the object of his visit too quickly but after some further parley, said:

"You see, Sir," said Bob, "the man wants sixty acres broken and will pay three dollars per acre for the breaking. That will make $180.00. Now, if I could buy a team for that amount, I could do the work and when the money was earned, I could pay for the team. You have some horses in the yard. Couldn't you sell me a team? I will give you my note, Sir, to secure you until I can do the work and receive the money to pay for them."

When Bob said this, the man smiled around the corners of his mouth. He was evidently interested in Bob's nerve and assumption and said:

"Boy, you have great plans in view, and I will see what I can do to assist you in perfecting them. Come with me."

Bob, upon inquiry, was informed that his good

new friend had lived out there about four years and that his name was H. C. Freeman.

They walked toward the barn and entered, passing out into a long shed where he had some young horses.

The farmer remarked, "I am not acquainted with your uncle, however, I am going to try you, as I believe you are made out of the right kind of material, the kind that will pull a boy right through to win for himself the respect of all those with whom he comes in contact."

The farmer drove into the shed two horses that had only been harnessed to a wagon a few times. Then he went toward the house. As he neared the kitchen he saw the clothes line fastened to one end of that structure, the other end to a post in the ground.

This line had been used to dry the family washing and had not yet been taken in. The line being longer than was needed for the week's wash, the unused line was hanging over a nail driven into the post. With his pocket knife, he cut off two pieces and came walking toward the shed. Here he sat down in the stable door and made two rope halters. As he finished, he arose and said to Bob: "Come with me boy, I will see what I can do."

The farmer again walked through the barn and out into the end of the shed where stood his young horses, biting and playing with one another. Stepping up to a fine looking bay colt, he slipped the rope halter over his nose and ears.

Handing Bob the rope, he told him to lead the colt into one of the stalls in the barn. Bob's hopes had now risen about as high as possible to think that the farmer was really going to sell him the horses on the terms he had stated to him. "He has not said so," thought Bob, "but his actions make me think he will do so."

He soon brought in another one and from his style Bob thought he was full of telegraph wire. Tying the young horse in another stall, he invited Bob into his house. In one corner of the family room was an old-fashioned walnut desk. With a key taken from his pocket, he unlocked the desk and opened it. Moving up his arm chair and adjusting his glasses he reached into one of the pigeon holes and withdrew a blank note. Dipping his pen into the ink, he wrote as follows:

"BEATRICE, NEBRASKA———————

"Six months after date, I promise to pay to H. C. Freeman, the sum of One Hundred and Eighty Dollars ($180.00) for value received in the purchase of two horses."

The farmer then handed Bob the pen, who wrote his name in a plain hand and looked up to the man who had placed so much confidence in him and said, "I can scarcely tell you how I feel, Mr. Freeman, for what you have done for me this morning. When I informed my uncle what I proposed to do in coming over here to see if you would sell me a team, I did not know that you had any horses that you could spare. My uncle said that I must not be disappointed if you refused to sell me a team,

providing you had a pair to sell, that I was only a boy, had no money and was a stranger to you.

"As I rode over on the old bay mare, I pictured purchasing the team. I could see the large green field of buffalo grass, of sixty acres growing smaller, in my imagination that I would be successful in as I followed the plow day after day. I felt in my own mind that you would not refuse me. Now that you have sold me the team, I'll prove to you, Mr. Freeman, that I will accomplish what my imagination pictured that I could do. I will turn over that sixty acres of wild buffalo sod, the money will be paid, and I will come right over the next day and take up my note."

Mr. Freeman noted the expression in young Bob's face, for Bob's heart was full and overflowing. "Imagination." said Mr. Freeman, "Do you know, my boy, that that word applies to all of the greatest achievements and accomplishments. First when a thing is started, to be perfected, the thing itself must be pictured out in the imagination.

"The one who imagines a thing before he starts to perfect it, may be called a dreamer, but when you grow up to be a man you will more and more realize what this force of imagination really means.

"When you start out to do anything, my boy, always imagine in your own mind how that thing will look; imagination is the foundation block upon which you are to erect the complete structure.

"When you came over to see me about the purchase of the horses, you stated that in your imagination, you could picture just what I was going to

do, that I was to sell you the team and take your note in payment for the horses.

"This is a picture drawn from real life and set before you, my boy. There is nothing in the entire world that will accomplish as much as imagination, when it is set to work along progressive lines of hope and truth. It out-weighs love, and ambition for none of these things could exist without imagination."

Bob had discovered in Mr. Freeman a real friend, a man who understood boys, and when his wife invited Bob to come over often, their young daughter, about Bob's age, smiled with approval.

Bob really felt like a new boy for the sunshine was after all breaking through, and the dark clouds of the past were all moving over to where he hoped they would not return to cast shadows over his path, and his heart was filled with love for those kind people who had put so much trust and confidence in him while yet he was a stranger to them. "I trust everything will come out as you have planned," said Mr. Freeman, "I believe you will do as you say."

Walking out to the wagon Bob untied the old bay mare and was soon mounted on her back.

Mr. Freeman led out one horse and handed Bob the rope and went back into the shed for the other one and said, "These young horses have been driven to the wagon only a few times. They are not broken to work and you must handle them with care and whatever you do, never strike one with a whip. Just talk to them gently and you will

have a good team. Do not try to push them too hard as they are soft, being unaccustomed to hard work, but with kindness and good care they will do the work."

"I fully realize all you say. I will use them well and will pay for them for this is one of the happiest days I have had since I left my home," said Bob, as he started off with the very best wishes of his new made friends.

Mr. Freeman could see that Bob was a real live boy, full of life and action, although he lacked five months of being fourteen years old.

Bob's manners and appearance were those of a real boy; and this was a great help to him in making friends.

Bob started off with the young horses across the great prairie, nothing but the green grass, the sunlight and the blue sky being visible. If Bob had gone over there this morning in a half-hearted way, and made the request, he would have come back without the team.

This is a true picture drawn from real life which we set out before every boy. The entire world is the frame around it. No boy's will-power can be developed by inaction and by waiting in the corner to be found and developed. Some boys are so accustomed to hear the word "don't" that they hesitate and wait in the corner. Bob found his will-power this morning and he backed it up by his imagination and, therefore, was successful.

One great source of education for a boy is to come in contact with happenings that lend joy to

his life. A boy cannot meet new people and come in contact with new things, without observing new ideas which develop in his young growing mind new visions.

Bob had his hands full in holding his young team and sticking on the back of the old bay mare. There was no such thing as allowing his new team to get away now that he had them. How proud this Indiana boy was this morning! He, homesick? Not a bit of it. Bob felt bigger than the Governor of the State of Nebraska on his inauguration day. Here he was with a pair of horses that were actually his own. Imagination, will-power and the signing of a piece of paper had closed the deal.

Two hours before he had but twenty-five cents in his pocket, all the capital that he possessed in the world, and here out on the wild prairies of the Great West among the wolves and jack rabbits he had really started to work out his own destiny. He had made the beginning without assistance from anyone. He just did it himself, that was all there was to that. He realized of course, that he did not have them paid for but that was another thing. He fully determined to make a desperate effort to do that.

The very next thing was a harness to put on the backs of the young horses. His prospects were not bright but he would manage in some way. He did manage and in two days had a harness paid for in full and still had his twenty-five cents in his pocket.

One of the best signs of ultimate success is a flat

refusal to learn how *not* to quit the job you have undertaken to do. Bob's doings this morning proved this to him.

Here he is riding over wild prairie land,
Leading his new horses with his own hand.
It was he that made this important deal.
Oh my! How joyful it makes him feel!

Don't expect things to always go right
For one may miss, when just in sight.
When things go wrong, as they often do,
Then and there it's simply up to you.

If the load seems to press you down,
Don't groan about with a sour frown,
Put a block under the wheel, rest a bit,
Try again. You'll win, you must not quit.

Don't give up because the pull goes slow,
You may hit it big with just another blow.
Put all your will power into the thing,
And you'll hit in the center of the ring.

When Bob, the day before, left the small Western village with his old-fashioned satchel on his back, he was full of hope, for he felt that he would hit something that would be to his advantage.

One would naturally choose most any other place to look for a job, for jobs out on the Plains where the neighbors were three and four miles apart, naturally would be scarce. He had been some time coming on from Indiana and had reached the prairie land, the same day that the important letter came from his native State.

There was an opportunity revealed in that letter, and, as Bob was looking for opportunities, he

grasped it so firmly that there was no danger of its getting away.

The young team enjoyed the freedom and it was all Bob could do to hold them, one on each side of the old bay mare. Presently, they came in sight of his uncle's house. As he drew rein and stopped the horses in the yard, his uncle was coming from the corn crib with a basket of corn to give the stock for their meal.

Putting it upon the ground, he looked up at the boy in astonishment. Bob saw the expression on his uncle's face and raised his hat in salute. He slid off the old mare, who walked to the pump for a drink of water, while Bob stood holding his young horses, looking like a king.

"Well, well, Bob, what does this mean?"

"Mean?" said Bob, "It means that I have purchased a pair of horses."

By this time Bob's aunt came out and was talking also. She was greatly surprised at the new team.

"Well, Robbie Royalton, where did you find those splendid young horses, and how did you get them?"

"Uncle, you and Aunt do look dreadfully surprised. You see I went over and purchased this team of your neighbor. I know the point of the deal that amused you,—how did I get so much money. I will tell you how it was done. You know the letter you received last night contained a proposition to pay in cash one hundred and eighty dollars as soon as that sixty acres of prairie land was broken. I decided last night that, if possible, that one hundred and eighty dollars was to pay for the

team that pulled the breaking plow that turned over the buffalo grass.

"I bought them for one hundred and eighty dollars. When I rode over to see about them I had twenty-five cents in my pocket, and that amount I still have."

At this, Bob drew from his pocket the small piece of silver. "I gave this man my note, good for six months, and I will break the prairie and the money will be sent, and the team paid for. You see all anyone has to do is to drive on."

"Well, boy, you'll do. There is no question but that you came from Indiana. I do not believe there is another boy in the State who could make a deal like that."

Walking up to Bob, he put his hand gently upon his head and said, "You will get through all right, and I know it. There is a big job before you, and I fear the young horses are pretty light for the work, and you say they have only been driven to a wagon a few times."

"Yes, I will break them gently and see they have good care. Now, Uncle, I want to make a bargain with you. I want you to board me and feed my horses until I get through with the work, then I will turn in and work for you with the team until I have repaid you for my board and feed for my team."

"I will gladly give you all you can eat and all the horses can eat in helping you get started. You have to get a harness and a breaking plow yet, and how are you to do that?"

"I will arrange that in some way," said Bob.

Putting the colts into the shed, he asked his uncle for the loan of his harness and wagon to give the colts a little exercise. He was figuring on going to the town of Beatrice to see about getting a plow and harness to commence work.

He hitched up the young horses, and jumped into the farm wagon, and sat down on the seat where he had sat the night before when his uncle gave him the ride.

He adjusted the lines, while his uncle held the bridles of the spirited young horses.

"Let them go," said Bob, and speaking gently to them, they started off as though they were in a pasture and free from the harness and wagon behind them. Bob turned them into the big road that led out into the prairie and allowed them to move quite freely at first. He knew the best way was not to try to curb them, but to allow them their heads for a short spell, and being soft, they soon would come down of their own accord to a walk.

When he rode over that morning to see the farmer about the horses, he saw a covered wagon away off to the east, coming westward. The rush of immigration was on at this season, and there were to be seen each day passing by his uncle's sod house, wagons covered with canvas, carrying the family of some man West to make a home for them.

The horses that pulled the wagon, and the cows tied to the back of the wagon, looked tired and lank from their long journey.

When he had gone a distance from the house, he

came to a wagon at the side of the road. The owner had three horses and one of them was lying on the grass, stretched out, fearfully bloated.

Bob drove on for some distance, then he came back and passed the covered wagon and stopped, inquiring of the man the cause of the sickness of the horse.

"I don't know," said the poor fellow, who looked tired, and badly sun-burned, being as brown as a berry. "I left home a few weeks ago with two teams, and one of my horses took sick and died, and now this one is in bad shape also, and no doubt will die."

"Just step up and hold my team a moment," said Bob, who jumped from the wagon and ran over to where the sick animal was lying. Feeling the ears and looking him over, Bob concluded it was a bad case of colic and one dose of the right kind of medicine would fix the horse all right.

"What have you given the animal?" asked Bob.

"I have nothing to give him," said the man.

The sun was sending its heat down upon the earth. The poor horse was in great pain, as it lay there in the boiling sun.

"Back your wagon around there so the head of that sick horse will be in the shade. I will be back here soon and fix him up all right." Bob jumped into his wagon and off he went to the home of his uncle.

He had noticed a harness in the back of the immigrant's wagon. Oh, how he wished he owned that harness!

When he drove into the yard his uncle was going in to dinner and stopped as Bob came up.

"Say, Uncle, I want you to help unhitch these horses for me. There is a traveler down the road with a very sick horse, and I can cure him if I can get the right kind of medicine."

"What kind do you want?"

"Peppermint and red pepper, with a long-necked bottle."

"You will find the medicine in the house and the bottle in the barn, standing on a sill by the curry comb box."

Bob jumped out of the wagon, ran for the bottle, then to the house, and told his aunt that he wanted some strong peppermint and some red pepper for a sick horse.

Thinking that one of Bob's horses was sick, his aunt soon brought forth a bottle of peppermint and a can of red pepper.

"What is the cause of the sickness? Have you been driving them too hard?"

"No, Aunt, it is not one of my horses that is sick. The horse belongs to a traveler up the road about a mile.

"I will soon fix up a dose that will make the poor suffering animal well."

Filling the bottle with about one-third of hot water, Bob put in a tablespoonful of red pepper and a teaspoonful of peppermint, corked the bottle and put it down by the house.

He went to the shed and led out the old bay mare and mounting her back, his aunt handed him the

bottle and the young doctor was off. He soon reached the roadside where the sick horse was lying. Going up to the wagon, he tied the old mare to a wheel and telling the traveler to raise up the head of the horse, he put the bottle to its mouth and poured the contents down. The poor horse seemed to know that this was for its good, as it swallowed the mixture at once.

"Now get the animal up on its feet and move it about a few minutes." This was a task but after it had been led around a little, it began to feel better.

"You had better drive down a half mile farther," said Bob. "There is a small stream of water and there you should rest until tomorrow. I will come down this evening and see the horse."

Bob had gotten home and eaten his dinner when his uncle said, "I have a plow that I can fix up for a breaking plow. Now the harness is all you need."

"I will get a harness and be ready for work by tomorrow."

"I know where the line is to the man's one hundred and sixty acres," said his uncle, "And after dinner, you and I will go up there and stake off the sixty acres and, with a gang plow, I will make the first furrow around the whole thing."

That was just what Bob had intended to ask his uncle to do.

Taking a long tape line, they hitched up the three horses to the gang plow and, with the stakes for markers, they were soon on the ground measuring off the sixty acres. When this was completed, Bob's

uncle set the plow and, getting into the seat, he began. As he went along, the sod of wild buffalo grass rolled over on its back like a viper, from one end of the furrow to the other.

"My, that earth looks black and rich! If we had that kind of ground to work back in Indiana, it would make those farmers who are accustomed to stones and stumps look happy," said Bob.

In a short time the first furrow was completed around the sixty acres. Then Bob's uncle went to work in his own field and Bob went down to see how the traveler's horse was coming along. He saw the animal standing near the wagon.

The traveler said: "You have saved my horse. I know it would have died had you not come along here. It was the best one I had, and I would have felt like going back from here had he died."

"Your horses are not accustomed to buffalo grass and you should give them plenty of salt each day and you will have no further trouble."

"How much do I owe you, boy, for doctoring my horse?"

"Oh, that is all right," said Bob, "I would not think of making any charge for relieving the sufferings of a dumb animal."

"That is strange," said the traveler, "I am not accustomed to finding such chaps as you out West. Everyone I have purchased feed from has charged me about double what it is worth, and here you have saved my horse and will not take anything for it."

"You see I came here only yesterday from In-

diana, and expect to go to work for myself. I have arranged to get a team this morning, and I am going to break that prairie over there to the left, where you saw us staking it out. That was my uncle who turned over the first furrow. A man wrote a letter to him, which he received yesterday, to get sixty acres of this broken, and he would send the money to pay for the job when it was completed. You saw me this morning driving that young team. I bought them this morning and will commence as soon as I get a harness."

"How much did you pay for these?"

"Nothing yet. I gave my note for one hundred and eighty dollars which I expect to pay when I get the money for doing the work."

"And you lack a harness?" asked the man.

"Yes, Sir, that is all," said Bob looking wistfully at the straps hanging out of the back end of the traveler's covered wagon.

"I have an extra one. How much will you give me for it?" The traveler reached into the back of the wagon and pulled out a set of double harness.

He said, "I don't know as I will have any use for two, and I will sell this one cheap."

"How much is that horse worth?" asked Bob.

"That horse is worth one hundred and fifty dollars, if he is worth a cent."

"And what will you take for the harness," asked Bob.

"I'll let you have it for ten dollars," said the traveler.

"Well, you say I saved your horse and he is worth

one hundred and fifty dollars. Now, as I need a harness badly, I will call the deal even if you will give me that harness."

"I don't know," said the traveler, looking up in surprise, "that would be a little steep."

"Yes, but you say that you are accustomed to paying double for everything. A veterinary surgeon would have charged you five dollars for his services, so I make it ten, just double, and you will not be disappointed in paying double."

"You have a great head on you, boy, and as I fully believe you saved the life of my horse, it is a go." He pulled out the collars and both bridles and handed them to Bob, who put his head through the collars and, taking the harness, started towards his uncle's straw barn about a mile away.

The short chains on the ends of the tugs played around his legs as he walked home with his harness. Coming up to the house, his aunt heard the rattling of the chains and pushed open the door. There stood Bob all "harnessed up." Stooping over, he allowed the collars to drop from his shoulders, then he looked at his aunt.

"Where in the land of living did you get that harness, Bob?"

"Oh, that was easy. You see when I came for that dose for the sick horse, I was well aware the traveler had an extra set in his wagon. When he left the States he had two teams. One of the horses died, so he sold his wagon and kept the harness. The harness was worn by the horse whose life I saved."

"Well, Bob, if you ain't a dandy. You just go at things as if you knew how. I never saw the beat. Of all the boys in my life, you are certainly a wonder!"

Taking a wash tub, Bob poured in some water and with a scrub brush and soap he commenced to give the harness the first bath it had had since the leather left the cow's back, at least it looked that way to him.

In a couple of hours of soaking, rubbing and mending, he had the harness hanging on a line and was brushing in some grease, when his uncle drove up to the barn on completing his day's work.

When he saw the boy at work he was amazed.

"Where did you get that harness, Bob?" asked his uncle.

"I got that of the fellow down the road, who had the sick horse, for professional services and a dose of peppermint and red pepper," said Bob.

"You got that harness for doctoring that horse?"

"That's it exactly."

This appeared strange to Bob's uncle, who considered it carefully and then looked at the boy. A team stopped in front of the sod house, and a man came up to inquire how far it was to Beatrice.

"Twelve miles," said Mr. Royalton.

"This is the man, Uncle, that I made the deal with for the harness."

"Yes, I traded the boy the harness for curing my horse," and at this he stepped up and looked at the harness, which now was quite different from what it was when Bob got it from him.

"He got a good bargain," remarked the traveler as he shrugged his shoulders and started back to resume his journey.

After supper Bob got out his young team, put on the harness, adjusted the straps to make them fit, and hitched up the colts. He started for a drive. The sun had already set in the west, casting its red rays over the blue sky. He drew rein on his young high-spirited horses and went down the road, the dust flying at each step of the horses' hoofs.

He felt now like a different boy, much different from what he was when he left home. He must now pen a short letter to mother and tell her of his great success.

Here he had a span of horses and a harness and would soon have them paid for. He was a very astute young man, and took nothing for granted. He was never found waiting for something to turn up, or for an opportunity. He always made his opportunities.

The following morning he had the young team hitched to the light breaking plow. His uncle held the handles, as breaking prairie in Nebraska is different from plowing in Indiana. The sod must be cut not deeper than two inches and this required a sharp share on the plow. The wheel was adjusted so as to keep the plow at this depth and the start was made.

The young horses did not know what it meant at first. One would go ahead, then the other. Bob knew this would not do, so kept them together and at the first round a very narrow furrow was taken.

It was not long before the horses knew what their young master wanted them to do, and, by kindness, they were soon broken to the hard work.

Bob was out in the big field early in the morning and at sunset he was still there. He kept at work. After each round, he turned the plow over on its back and with a file, sharpened the share. The roots of that wild buffalo grass had apparently been there and growing since the Creator said, "Let there be every plant after its kind."

The roots were hard and like wire to cut, and the sharper the plow share, the easier for the horses to pull the breaking plow. Each round gave him more experience in his new work.

He began to fear at the end of the second week that the work was too great for his horses, and each day his uncle and aunt cautioned him not to hurry the team too much.

Many people were going West, and every day where Bob was at work, he could see covered wagons drawn by tired looking horses.

Some of these would have painted on the side of the wagon, "Going West or Bust." Others, coming back, would have painted underneath, "Have been there, am returning busted."

Bob stopped one day at the corner nearest the road to sharpen the plow share and give his horses an opportunity to breathe. He was pulling out the manes that had worked under the collars, when he saw a covered wagon coming east. The driver turned in over the black sods with a big team of mules.

"Hello there, boy!" said the traveler. "That work is pretty heavy for your horses. Who owns those horses?"

"I do," said Bob.

"Let me hitch on the mules for a round and see how easy they can do the work."

Bob readily consented, as it would give his team a rest.

"Are you commencing to open up a farm here, and where do you live?"

"Over there about a mile to the left."

The mules were hitched to the plow. Bob held the handles while the traveler held the lines. The mules walked around with ease and made a much wider furrow than the young horses. He now bantered Bob for a trade, saying that he had been west and was going back.

"From the lettering on your wagon, I would suppose that you were going back 'busted' also," said Bob.

"Yes, that is just the reason I am going back to the States. I am tired of driving mules, and as your team would be better on the wagon, I would like to swap the mules for your horses."

"How bad do you want to trade?" said Bob, thinking that he ought not to trade his team before they were paid for. He saw how easy it was for the mules to pull the plow, and looking them over, he concluded they were sound and young.

"I will trade for ten dollars to boot," said the owner of the mules.

"No, Sir," said Bob, thinking of the lonely

Bob Trades His Young Horses for a Span of Black Mules.

twenty-five cents in his pocket, "if I trade the boot must come from you."

He informed Bob that his cash was very low and that was the reason he offered him such a good bargain. Bob saw there was no chance of getting or giving boot, and said: "If you want to trade as they stand, all right, harness and all." Bob's harness was not as good as the one the mules had on their backs. "If you want them as they stand, hitch them on the wagon and I will continue plowing."

"Well, I don't know," said the emigrant, "But as I like horses better than mules I will hitch them to the wagon."

"Use them well," said Bob, as he started the mules to work. When he reached the corner, he glanced over the prairie, and saw the covered wagon drawn by the horses he had put so much hope in.

Bob did not like to part with them, but knew they were not as well fitted for the hard work he was putting them to as the mules which were far better than horses for such work.

His uncle was working in the field one mile from where he was and saw Bob when he changed teams. When the traveler left, driving the horses away, he started over to see what he had been doing. Bob kept at work and by the time his uncle came up he had made his second round, as the mules walked much faster than the horses.

"What is up now?" asked his uncle. "Did you trade with that fellow?"

"Yes, I traded with him even up, harness and horses for these mules and harness."

He looked them over carefully and said: "You never made fifty dollars easier in your life. This team is much better suited for this work than the other and, being mules, you can depend on them for a good day's work."

Bob did not know much about the fine points either in a horse or mule. He was quite a hand to doctor them when anything was wrong, but to have the approval of his uncle in the trade made him feel justified in his action.

His team of big black mules walked along, snapping the roots of the buffalo grass with ease. This put more life into Bob, if possible, and he saw they would, with good care, stand up under the work. They proved to be what he wanted, and were very tough. Round after round he "chiseled" away. Day after day he followed the team.

The black spot was growing larger and the green one, carpeted by nature, was getting smaller. In sixty-five days, from the time the first round was made, Bob turned the last one at three o'clock in the afternoon.

His uncle had written to his friend to forward the money as he wanted it there the day the work was completed. The money had been received and after supper that night he said: "You have been faithful and done your work well. I have the money here to pay for the work."

His uncle counted out thirty-six bright new five dollar bills, handed them to Bob, making a pile big

enough to open any boy's eyes, who had for weeks been carrying around a twenty-five cent piece,—his all.

When Bob retired for the night, he counted over the money, again and again. He spread the bills out lengthwise making a border nearly around his bed covering, then he counted and counted some more. He could scarcely realize that he had earned all this with his own effort. What he regretted most of all was the fact that on the morrow he must pay every cent of it on his note. He had given his note. His word was behind the note and the money must go to pay for the team in full.

Early the next morning he went over to his newly made friend, to the stranger who had trusted him for the team.

"Good morning, Mr. Freeman, I came over to take up that note you hold against me."

"Well, I declare, you have finished with that breaking already?"

"Yes, Sir, I have, and I have received my pay for the work."

Going into the house the farmer unlocked the desk, reached into a pigeon hole, handed Bob the note, who counted over the big pile of new bills.

"I just knew you would come out all right," said the farmer, when Bob handed over the money. He took one from the top of the pile and returned it to him as a reward for his promptness and honesty.

"Now, my boy, you have done nobly," said the good man. "If you always do as well as you have done with me in this transaction, you will always

have friends, and win every time. Honesty is one of the most essential things in the make-up of a young man. Do right no matter what kind of difficulties come to you, and you will get courage to surmount them."

"Do right," thought Bob, that was what his mother had always taught him and that honesty would be worth more to him than all the gold he could carry. He had now an object lesson as to what his mother meant. This kind old man believed in him as a son, now that he had proven to him that he was worthy of his confidence and had rewarded him for doing his duty.

Bob was here taught a lesson in his first deal that would be beneficial to him when he became a man. A lesson so well learned when young would surely be beneficial to him later.

"Now, boy, what are you going to do next?" said Mr. Freeman.

"Well, Sir, I have decided to put out some crops if I can rent land that will be suitable for them."

"I can let you work at least fifty acres on shares and will give you one-half of all you make."

"I will study this and let you know soon," as it was now time to begin putting in spring grain.

He felt differently now about the team. He had them paid for, and that night he wrote his mother telling her that he had the work done and the team paid for, and that he was in a fair way to make money farming, that he would hustle and in another year he would be able to purchase some land and then he would send for her to keep house for him.

Bob thought it would be fine to provide a home for his mother, who had done so much for him. He felt this a duty, a duty he would never be able to satisfactorily fulfill, quite to his mind, no matter how much comfort he could place around her.

Bob could see nothing that would alter his plans for the future. It looked bright just now, much brighter than it had since he left his home in Indiana. He supposed that he had now hit on the right course to success. He did not then realize that his bright hopes of sunshine for the future would soon be covered by a dark cloud, and that other dark clouds would appear on his horizon.

He called on Mr. Freeman the following morning and rented the land. He put out twenty acres of wheat, ten acres of corn, and ten acres of oats. He took good care to keep the weeds out of the corn, and there being plenty of rain, the crops came forth and were in fine condition for a big yield.

It made his young heart proud to look over that wheat field and to think he was the owner of half of it. The wheat was ripening fast and would be ready to harvest in about a week. His corn was so tall that he did not dare to cultivate it any more. It looked very promising and so did the oats.

Bob had already figured on the yield of oats per acre, also, the present price of wheat, oats and corn. He knew how much he was going to clear for his share for the summer's work.

The wheat was good for twenty-five bushels per acre and perhaps more. This would make him five hundred bushels for the twenty acres. One half of

this would net him two hundred and fifty bushels at $1.10 per bushel, two hundred and seventy-five dollars.

Taking out seventy-five dollars for cutting, threshing and hauling to market, and forty dollars for seed, would leave him clear on the wheat, one hundred and sixty dollars.

His oats were good for thirty-five cents per bushel. In the ten acres he would have three hundred and fifty bushels, or one hundred and seventy-five bushels for himself. This at thirty-five cents per bushel would make sixty-one dollars even. The corn was sure of fifty bushels per acre, making one thousand bushels of corn, or five hundred for him. This would be worth twenty cents per bushel, making one hundred dollars for the corn. Taking twenty-five dollars for the husking and hauling left him seventy-five dollars. The profit on his wheat would be one hundred and sixty dollars, sixty-one on his oats and seventy-five on his corn, making two hundred and ninety-six dollars.

His team and harness were worth two hundred dollars more, making four hundred and ninety-six dollars for ten months' work.

"Why should I not be satisfied?" thought Bob, and this was the way he wrote to his mother of how much he would make on the season's work.

As it had now been four days since he had a look at the crops, he felt as though he could not stand it any longer, so he jumped on the back of one of the mules and rode over to the field of wheat.

He had made all the arrangements about its cut-

ting as his uncle was to help him do this with a header. It was to be cut and threshed in the field.

As Bob drew up to the wheat field, he noticed those beautiful golden heads were all drooping

THE GRASSHOPPERS CAME AND DESTROYED BOB'S CROPS, WHICH MADE HIM VERY SAD.

downward. This was the year the chinch bugs and grasshoppers were so bad. They came and ate up everything they could find that was green.

These bugs had been through Bob's field the day before and put their poison sting into every stalk of wheat in that field. Bob could scarcely believe

his own eyes when he looked over that field of grain. To think that he, a poor boy from Indiana, should be treated so! Destruction, there it was. It was tough, he thought, to take his first crop.

Bob rode up to see Mr. Freeman who gave him all the encouragement possible. "You see," he said, "it would not do to have good crops every year. We must expect bad years as well as good ones. This is similar to a person who is never sick. He does not know how to appreciate good health. When a person is sick once in awhile, he will realize how thankful he should be for health and happiness."

"I suppose that is the case," said Bob, "I know I feel pretty sick just now about my wheat. I don't believe it will pay to cut it."

"Oh, yes, cut it and get what you can and be thankful for that. Remember you are young yet and if you live in this country, you must learn that all farmers work and strive to cultivate the soil though they often meet with failures.

"You should also remember that a farmer is compelled to work hard from sun to sun putting in his crops, cultivating them to keep out the weeds, and in addition is compelled to fight the bugs and worms that are liable to destroy them. City people give but little thought to the farmer, who toils from morning until long after dark to supply their tables with food."

Bob cut his wheat and instead of yielding twenty-five bushels to the acre, he got six, and it was withered so badly that, after hauling it twelve miles, he received but fifty cents per bushel, bringing him

thirty dollars which he paid out for help in cutting and threshing.

Bob sold his corn on the ground to Mr. Freeman, and paid up for what repair work he had during the summer and had twenty-five dollars left.

He had done well since he came west until the chinch bugs and grasshoppers came and blasted his hopes. Bob could not give up, he was not built out of the kind of material that is blown away at the first blast of the wind. Like General Blucher, IT MUST AND SHALL BE DONE, was his motto.

Bob never did anything in a slipshod manner. He knew that to accomplish anything and get good results from it, the job must not only be done well, but perfectly. When he broke the prairie soil, so full of buffalo grass, he knew it was essential to cut every root and to turn every sod over completely upon its back, to allow the hot rays of the sun an opportunity to completely kill the roots.

When he put in the crop that the grasshoppers and chinch bugs had recently devoured, he did it well, and if he had started in the next day to plow and sow for another crop, it would have been put in with as much care as the first crop.

"Perfection to the finest" was Bob's motto, when he undertook a job. He had been taught by his mother that nature would have no use for a half-boy. It must have him at his best. He must work and put in his best thoughts, and the best energy into everything he did to make it complete.

He had long since conceived the idea that he must create as much as he consumed, and if he

would be of use in the world, he must create more.

Bob's mother had taught him to keep his troubles and disappointments to himself, to fight on and to overcome them, for to tell them was to burden others who might carry disappointments of their own.

Bob's experience working on a farm taught him that the farmer did not labor only to feed himself, but to serve loaves of bread to others. He had some satisfaction in knowing that if his labor upon the farm did not go into loaves for others, it went to maintain lives, at any rate.

The grasshoppers were a source of annoyance not only to him, but to farmers all over the state. Many had large families depending upon them, while he had no one except his mother. All he had to do was to provide for himself and team. How was he to do it? What was he to do next? This question now presented itself to him.

That night after he had gotten back from Beatrice where he had gone to sell his wheat, his thoughts were not centered on the black earth around him. As he fastened the tugs of the harness into the breeching, unsnapped the neck yokes, did up the lines and started the mules for the shed, he was through.

The crops were harvested and sold. The profits were not to his liking, but then there was a cause for that. He had the satisfaction of knowing he had done the very best he could. "A man could have done no better, so what is the use," thought Bob, "my plans have miscarried."

CHAPTER V

IF the adult reader has grown from boyhood to manhood with no time for reflection, and he can think of nothing to prompt him to look about for a young boy to help and encourage, one who is earnestly striving, doing his very best, and craving for encouragements,—if he cannot find such a boy to offer suggestions and encouragements from the great multitude of boys who are compelled by misfortune to push on alone, then perhaps there is nothing in this true story of Robert Royalton that will appeal to him.

It was growing quite late in the fall at this time; winter would soon be at hand, and as Bob finished feeding his team, he leaned against the oat bin and tried to look into the future that held problems which came into his young life and which he must solve the best he could and in his very own way.

Bob's spirit was now fully challenged, but it was far from being broken as his determined will kept it in operation. He would drive on no matter if all hope was out of sight, and the odds were against him.

Give all glory to the spirit of a determined boy who will never give up, but who fights on for success and fame that is sure to come. The world is

waiting for this kind of a lad to grow up for he will blaze his own trail to the very top and become a leader of men.

Many things passed through Bob's young brain. He was meditating on what to do, when his aunt came to the stable door and called him in to supper. Bob's aunt knew the ambition of that young soul. She was a noble woman, one who could give advice and counsel by a look, an act, a word and a smile that went deep into the heart of Bob Royalton, the hero of this story.

He poured out the water from the pail into the tin wash pan, sitting on an old chair near the well, and taking a piece of home-made soap, he rubbed it on his hands.

Night was drawing near. He saw a gray wolf prowling about the barn yard looking for something to nibble at for his supper. There was life in that hungry beast of the prairie. Its existence depended upon the food it could secure.

Bob knew that while things had come out badly he would have no trouble to care for that life that was placed in his own keeping.

He could hear the mother prairie hen calling the brood to her protection. This made him think of his mother.

When he went in and sat down at the table the lighted lamp burning low shone in his face, and his uncle could see that the expression was much different from that of a few weeks before.

"Well, Bob, what have you on your mind? You have done a good deal of thinking the last few days.

You know this world is a chance, and in it we all have an opportunity. You have had some experience as a farmer. Come, now, what do you think of that for a calling? You now have your affairs all cleared up and you can stay and work around here with me until spring opens up, then rent some land, and next year you will come out all right."

"It may be true, Uncle. I realize the future for me and for everyone is what each individual makes it."

"That is no doubt true. You are now past fourteen years old, and it appears to me that you have long since untied yourself from your mother's apron string and have become accustomed to planning for yourself. What are you planning for next?"

"That I will tell you in the morning." When Bob decided on anything that concerned his future, that decision was always made on his pillow.

That night when he retired the moon shone into the window of his chamber, casting shadows across the room. He sat down by the casement and looked up to that beautiful round ball of light. He had been told that a man occupied that bright domain, and he wondered if there were any grasshoppers in that land of purity.

His thoughts wandered as only those of a boy can, who has to arrange some new plan of action. He thought of Mother, back in the States in the little cottage by the mill. Oh, how dear to him was that little home! It was the home of his boyhood, the place where he had played with marbles and tops. A place that he could never forget and above

all there was no one so dear to him as his mother.

He had not given much thought to his mother during the summer, as his mind was fully taken up with his novel surroundings. He wrote her often, and many of his letters contained plans that would have moved mountains and built railroads if capable of being put into action.

He could not do so for he was only a boy in the big state where he had turned the buffalo sod with the plow handle in his own hands.

Go back to the states and begin over! Yes, but how? There was his team. What would he do with them? Why, take them back of course. How? On a railway train? No! Certainly not! Drive them, hitched to a covered wagon. Could he do this? Was it possible for him to drive his team across the plains fifteen hundred miles? Of course, he could; there was nothing he was afraid to undertake, if he had once decided it was for the best.

Before retiring that night, he asked his Heavenly Father to guide him in making this decision. He was thankful for what He had already done for him, and he prayed that He would guide his decision aright.

In the morning as he sat eating his breakfast with his uncle and aunt, his uncle said:

"Well, Bob, I suppose you have decided to winter in Nebraska."

"No, Sir, I have my plans made. I am going back to the States, and the mules are to haul mother's winter wood to her cottage."

"Impossible," said Mr. Royalton. "It would be

impossible for you, a young boy, to drive that team so far alone. The Indians are treacherous now, and there are so many horse thieves, that you would not get far before you would be captured and your team stolen. No, Bob, I could not consent to your going so far alone."

"Uncle, I regret very much that your views and mine are different."

"That settles it then, I suppose, as far as the undertaking is concerned."

"It does," said Bob, "I have fully decided that the best course for me is to go back. Mother is alone and there will be a long cold winter. She will need my assistance. I will get up the wood, then sell the team and put in the winter in the little red schoolhouse."

"That point, Bob, I approve of," said his aunt. "Going to school is one of the things you should do and I only wish you could spend a couple of years in study."

"Yes, Aunt, that is my one desire which can never be fulfilled. I must earn my own bread and help mother. Going to school, I can arrange for in the winter only; in the summer I must work. Now, when I look back over the past year, spent in the free, open air, and see what I have done, I am proud to know that I have come in contact with experiences that will stay with me forever."

"Indeed you are right. You are the only boy that would have thought of doing as you did. Coming to the state alone and starting on nothing. Making your opportunities as you did, and for all

the chinch bugs and grasshoppers, you are still ahead. If you want to go back to Indiana for the winter, leave your team with me. I will care for them until spring, then you can return and commence farming again. You see, Bob, you have no wagon, and it would be impossible for you to take your team so far. It would take you at least two months to drive back."

"I will manage for a wagon in some way, and in two months you will hear from me back in the States."

All through Bob's young life he had planned and planned. He had built air castles only to be blown over, built bridges only to have them destroyed or burned before he could cross them, but he had an unusual amount of push that kept prompting him on into new fields of adventure.

He well knew that many of the best men in the country had gone west, taken up some of Uncle Sam's land, worked hard and were still full of hope that they would "win out".

It was different with him. He was young, growing into manhood. His aim was to build himself up, to improve his condition all he possibly could. He fully believed there were chances much better for him than to stay in the west and hold a plow handle.

Bob loved the fields. He loved nature. All it was and contained were ever sacred and dear to him. Had his opportunities been more favorable he would have chosen a life tilling the soil in preference to any other.

"I have some business at Beatrice, and will go there this morning. I would like the wagon if you are not going to use it today," said Bob.

"You are at liberty to use anything here that you wish. I will be plowing in the field today, therefore will not need the wagon," replied his uncle.

Bob was seated in the farm wagon driving toward Beatrice as the sun was creeping up over the eastern horizon. There were a few blue clouds in the sky, none but what Bob could easily penetrate with his thoughts. He had felt blue the day before, as he had not then decided on what course he was going to take.

It was different this morning. He had eased his mind on that point and was just as enthusiastic now in putting his new plans into execution as he was the morning he broke the first furrow around the sixty acres.

He was thinking as much of the past as he was of the future. He believed it was quite essential sometimes to glance over one's past in order to gauge the steam required for the future.

This was especially applicable in Bob's case, as he always entered into the future with a full pressure of steam, having all his bearings oiled, and if the smoke did not roll, he made sufficient dust, which answered for it. He took hold of a new undertaking with a heart full of hope.

Nothing appeared to daunt him. He often got into the mud, but not to stay there, for the instant he observed he was not on solid foundation, he made his props secure by another plan. He often exam-

ined the under pinning to see if everything was in its place, taking nothing for granted. It was to be "sure" with Bob.

What better place could be had for the development of a boy than in the big garden of nature, where nature's laws are unfolded and imbued in the youthful mind an appreciation of its beauty?

We must now tell about Bob's dog, "Shep." Girls grow up with their dolls, but for a real live boy give him a dog that he can have out in the open, which is the truest kind of companionship for a boy.

Soon after Bob arrived at the sod house on the prairie, a covered wagon stopped in the main road in front of the house. A shepherd dog was limping along behind the covered wagon, and when the man came in to the pump to get some drinking water the lame dog lay down on the grass at the side of the road. Bob saw the dog and went out to him, lifting up his lame foot and was caressing the dog when the man came out with the water.

"Well, my boy, I see you like my dog; he injured his foot a few days back and it does not seem to get well. If you want a good dog I will leave Shep with you and you can doctor his foot." Shep looked up at Bob as much as to say, "please keep me and doctor my foot."

"All right," said Bob, "to test him whether he wants to stay or go, when you drive off, will determine his choice." The man informed Bob that Shep was very friendly with those whom he liked and who treated him well and was watchful at night.

When the covered wagon moved on Westward, Shep never moved, he was overjoyed to be with Bob and wagged his tail and looked up at him as the covered wagon and his former master moved on over the plains out of sight.

In a few days Shep's foot was well and judging by his actions he was much pleased to be with his young master. Shep followed the Covered Wagon for many weeks on its way westward, and of course was compelled to stand his ground with the many farm dogs that would run out and pitch on to him.

Usually dogs following behind a wagon for a long trip of many weeks, become tried and to prevent a scrap with the strange dogs that come out after them, duck under the wagon and go up between the horses and walk there until the wagon goes past the danger.

No matter where Bob went Shep was always by his side. Round after round did he follow his young master in the new made furrow. Bob fitted up a place for Shep to sleep which was on the outside of the sod house by the window near his own bed.

Many times in the night when the savage wolves came near the sod house looking for something to eat, Shep would take after them and drive them away; when he would stop to return, the wolves would start back after him if they were very hungry and this was usually the case.

The night before Bob had decided to drive his mules back to the States with a Covered Wagon, Shep went to drive the savage wolves away, and when he started to return the pack of hungry

beasts followed him. Shep had almost reached the corral not far from the house when he was attacked by the pack of wolves. This awoke Bob from his sleep, he went out in the moonlight and fired at the wolves, frightening them away. In the fierce fight with the wolves Shep was very badly injured. His injuries were so bad that in spite of all his young master could do for him, he died in the morning.

Bob's young heart experienced real grief as he realized that his faithful dog Shep, his dear companion, was dead. Bob had it all planned out that on his long overland trip alone, he would have Shep for a companion to talk to around the camp fire and at night when he was sound asleep, there would have been Shep to warn him of any danger prowling around the camp in the night when his young master was asleep in the Covered Wagon.

This was a dreadful loss to Bob, it was much greater than the loss of his crops that he had worked so hard to plant and to cultivate, which the grasshoppers destroyed.

That day Bob dug a grave near the corral, and when he laid Shep's body down in the grave in the cold damp ground, there were real tears that came from a boyish heart, shed over the death and burial of his dog Shep.

Bob's brave young heart was very sad as he made the preparations for his departure. He could not forget his love for his dog,—sometimes boys do have things come into their lives that give them sad hearts, and he is indeed a brave boy who can look

upon sorrow as one of the things that come along with happiness.

How did Bob look this morning as he sat in the farm wagon? Let us see: Barefooted, wearing a hickory shirt, a pair of overalls and a straw hat that was much the worse for wear. Under the covering of those common clothes was a young heart that beat for truth and honor. He was now passing a spot in the road, that looked familiar to him. What was it that attracted his attention? Ah, yes; here was the very spot where a few months ago he sat down to rest as the night was coming on, out on the wild plains where the wolves were desperate and he a homesick boy.

It was different now, for in those short months he had gained enough experience to make a man of a boy. He had earned a team with his own hands and as he held the lines over the backs of those long-eared mules, Bob felt that after all he had been well paid, if it had not been for the loss of his beloved dog Shep.

Coming into this little village out on the plains, located on the bank of the Big Blue River, he began to arrange for a wagon to take him across the plains. If Bob could then have seen what a great undertaking this was to be, he would have hesitated before making the venture that came near ending his life.

Most boys do not fear danger; they do not hesitate for fear that something may happen; their instinct and will power leads them right on and they usually succeed because they are not cowards.

We believe there never was an adventure undertaken before or since, where the mettle of a young soul, just a boy was put to such a severe test as this trip of Bob Royalton's, a trip that contained so many narrow escapes that Bob, with all his nerve and ambition, would not have dared to undertake had he known what was before him, driving across the plains alone in his covered wagon.

He had but a few dollars, and purchasing a new wagon was out of the question, so he drove up to the blacksmith shop where he had often been before to get his plowshares drawn to an edge.

This small shop was located on the bank of the Big Blue River. At its entrance was a hitching post where Bob tied his mules.

The smith who pounded the hot iron and put it together, was just kindling his fire before commencing the day's work. One hand was on the lever of the bellows. His sleeves were rolled up to his elbows, showing muscle and strength as he raised and lowered the long handle of the leather bellows.

Bob entered the shop for information concerning the old wheels that were lying on the outside, tilted up against the shop.

"Hello, Bop," said Mr. Schmidt, the German blacksmith, as the boy came in and stood before him with one foot resting upon the half-barrel tank full of water that the blacksmith cooled the hot tongs in. "Vot is de matter vid you here so early in der morning?"

Mr. Schmidt was a kind old man, one who was

very much interested in Bob. He knew all about the effort the boy was making.

"Well, Mr. Schmidt, I have concluded to quit farming."

"You quit vot?" said Mr. Schmidt.

"I have decided not to farm any more, that is, for the present."

"Vot iss dat for, Bop?"

"Well, you see I got rather the worst of my deal so far and I have concluded to go back to the States."

Bob did not relate his plan only so far as to make the village blacksmith understand that he was in need of a wagon, and he would like to purchase the old wheels at the side of the shop.

"Now, Bop, you have a mint of your own for a lad dot can come to dis wilt country and buy a team wit only twenty-fife cents and turn ofer sixty-acres of buffalo grass, and you don't vont to be tolt what to do by me. Every von dat can go is off for da States. De grasshoppers have dis land. Dey feast and grow while de farmers grow t'in. I know you will get home if any boy can, so I let you fix up vot kind vagon you want mit der old wheels. I will stay here, Bop, and blow de bellows and look at de crowd dat pass by. I know dis is only for a vile den dis great state vill be known var and vide for a prosperity vot come by and by."

In about an hour Bob called the old blacksmith to the door to look at the wagon he had assembled. It had three wheels and one of one size larger; fastened to a couple of old discarded axles.

"How much is the whole thing worth?" asked Bob.

"Vell, dare iss two dollars wort of iron on dot."

"All right," said Bob, handing the smith two silver dollars.

He looked over the running gear and tightened up the loose bolts. He fastened the old wagon to the back of the other wagon and started down to the bank of the Big Blue River to soak the wheels a little and make the tires more secure.

"So you tink you haf a vagon, Bop?"

"Yes, I'll make it do," said Bob.

The old rusty tires and wheels had been dried for months in the sun by the side of the shop and Bob concluded to back it into a deep hole in the Big Blue River and allow it to remain there for the rest of the day and that night.

He felt sure that the water in that time would soak up the old hubs and fasten the spokes into them more solidly. The tires, of course, could not become more rusty, even by being in water fifteen hours.

He drove up to the post office and mailed a letter to his mother stating that he would not write again for some little time as he would be very busy. He did not care to have his mother know that he was to take an overland trip, as there was no use of giving her any unnecessary worry. He figured that he would see her in about eight to ten weeks and how glad and surprised she would be to have him step into their cottage home, when she supposed him out on the plains.

He drove back to his uncle's and got there just as his uncle was coming out of the house from dinner.

"Hello, Bob, got back? Where is the wagon you went after?"

"Oh, that is safe enough. I have it soaking."

"Soaking, what do you mean?"

"I have a wagon and have it soaking."

"I don't quite make out what you are driving at."

"Easy enough," said Bob, "I rigged up a wagon at Schmidt's shop and backed it into the Big Blue River to soak. You see it will not take a very solid or substantial wagon to carry me and what few traps I have. I rigged up the running gear from the old wheels at the shop that had been outside too long for their good. This I backed down into that deep hole just behind the grist mill. I put it in to clear. No one can see it, and before I backed it in I fastened a chain to the tongue to hitch to when I want to pull it out in the morning."

"Quite a good idea," said Mr. Royalton.

"Yes, I suppose the ripples and bubbles on the top of the water are gliding over its wheels and the fishes are playing hide and seek between the spokes."

Bob's aunt came out to the shed and said:

"There is plenty to eat on the table, although it is not as warm as when we ate our dinner. You look hungry, so go in and commence at once. I will go out to the hen house and get a couple of fresh eggs and fry them for you. I know you are

hungry as it has been a long time since breakfast."

When Bob had seated himself at the table, his aunt returned, put a skillet on to fry the eggs, and sat down at the table and tried to persuade Bob to reconsider what he intended to do.

"It is no use, Aunt, I am fully convinced that it is the best thing possible for me to do. I appreciate all the kindness you and Uncle have shown me while I have been here. It is the future I must plan for and I am not prepared to meet it yet and this winter I will be sitting in the long, old fashioned seat in the red schoolhouse figuring out problems, reading, and writing, studying my lessons and improving every opportunity."

"You are right! I know you will come out all right, but you know your uncle and I are anxious for your future also, and we thought perhaps if you stayed here you could break more prairie and farm our land at a much better advantage than any other."

"No use, Aunt, I could not think of the idleness that would be on my hands this long winter. I must go to school."

He secured his aunt's shears and, going out to the shed, led out his mules and commenced to trim their manes and tails so they looked quite striking indeed.

He put in the afternoon cleaning up and repairing his harness, and filled up ten sacks with oats to feed the team on the long journey home. Oats were light and the old wagon could carry them and the

weight would be much less than that of pulling a breaking plow.

The next morning he was up at four o'clock, fed his team, and at six had them hitched to the wagon, when his aunt called him to breakfast. Then he drove to Beatrice, and up to the blacksmith shop.

He unhitched Jennie from the wagon and started down the bank with the whiffle-tree over his shoulder to pull out the old wagon. Hitching onto the chain, he led the faithful mule up the bank, and the old wagon after her. Reaching the shop, Bob fastened it behind the farm wagon and proceeded to the lumber yard where he was to secure some boards to make a box.

He did not intend to purchase one inch more lumber than was necessary for the box, as his cash was already too limited.

Here, in the lumber yard, after visiting the hardware store for nails, he made the box, laying on the bolster boards of sufficient width to fill them, then nailing cleats on underneath to hold them solidly in place. It was not long before Bob had the sides and ends securely fastened.

Paying for the lumber, he went to the hardware store for some bows to cover the box and hold the canvas. The hardware man measured with his rule where Bob should drive the staples in the box. When this was finished he went into a store that was supposed to keep everything and invited the proprietor out to the wagon to take the exact measure for a canvas to cover the bows.

After the canvas was cut from the bolt, it was necessary to have it sewed tightly together. Looking around for a while for someone to do the sewing, Bob went into a shoe shop and asked the cobbler if he would do the job for him. The canvas was soon sewed and tacked onto the bows. The back end was made and tacked in and a puckering string was prepared from the shoemaker's waxed-end.

Bob surveyed his wagon very carefully. There were a number of the town idlers also standing near, looking and passing remarks about the one-sided thing.

"Where are you going with that lop-sided old rattle-trap, kid?" asked one of the number.

"Never mind," said Bob, as he tied the rope that held the tongue a little tighter to the back end of the big wagon ahead. Strange, thought Bob, that some people have plenty of time to stand around hitching posts and prying into other people's business.

Bob unhitched the mules from the wagon and led them over to the iron pump, giving them some fresh water before he started on the twelve-mile drive back.

"I am doing pretty well," mused Bob, "I have a wagon, box, bows and canvas, all for about seven dollars,—better than I expected. Let them look," he said as he started off, "That is all the good it will do them. They will not have another opportunity."

He arrived at the prairie farm in the evening as it had taken him the greater part of the day to get

his wagon into shape. His uncle saw the covered wagon as it turned in from the main road.

"I declare, Bob, this looks like business. I believe you really intend to make the venture. I don't want to discourage you seeing you are determined upon your plan. When do you start?"

"At eight o'clock in the morning I will start on my long journey. Of course, the mules will walk all the way, as they could not stand such a long pull over all kinds of roads at a faster gait."

This, the last night for Bob Royalton in the sod house where he had lived while in the west, he was very busy. He had secured an old map from the postmaster and, laying it on the table, he outlined the route by the aid of a tallow candle. There is always a well-traveled road from one town to another and with the aid of this map he could lay out his route to the best advantage.

The following morning he was up bright and early. The new shoes the blacksmith had put on the mules glistened on their feet as he opened the shed door. He gave them their breakfast and an extra rub, then went to the granary and put the extra sacks of oats into the wagon box.

His bed was to be of straw in the bottom of the box. A couple of blankets that his aunt washed out for him was the covering.

He nailed to the back end of the wagon box, a box for the mules to eat from. His meals were to be served with his own hands. He provided himself with a box to keep his food in, the top being fastened on by two leather hinges. He purchased

a small iron kettle which was to hang to an iron rod with a hook on it over a fire, in true gypsy style.

At the breakfast table this morning the conversation was wholly about Bob's intended trip. His aunt had his box filled with meat, boiled eggs, and bread. He intended to purchase his food supplies in the different towns as he passed through.

He proceeded to the barn and was making the harness fast to the necks of his team, when his uncle came in and said:

"Bob, I would like to talk with you for a few minutes before you hitch up. Come, we will walk down the road a short distance."

"I will be pleased to hear anything you may have to offer," said Bob as he and his uncle strolled out of the yard.

"Now, Bob," said he, "this undertaking does not seem to trouble you one bit. You have planned for it and succeeded well, but now, seriously, Bob, that old wagon will give out on you before you are started. The tires will come off, then you are done for."

"Don't you believe it," said Bob, "If they come off, I will put them on again, and if the whole thing breaks down, I will side-track it, and ride mule-back."

"I see you are set on going and I suppose you will do as you say. You are yet only a young boy. You will meet with temptations through life as you grow older. I owe to your father a word of caution to you. Shun all the pitfalls that come in your

path. I know from what I have seen of you since you have been with me this summer, that you have in you what your grandfather had in him, some of the blue blood of the old Maine stock that runs rich and deep.

"Your father was killed when he was young. We know nothing of what he would have made of himself had he lived. You have nothing but what God gave you. You must work out your own salvation. I know you will come out all right in time. Just watch for opportunities, hold your head up, never get discouraged, and some day you will get to the top of the ladder.

"I warn you, Bob, as your father would warn you, could he speak from Heaven above, that a man's happiness depends upon his disposition.

"Do not begin life thinking you will be heart rich and happy when your purse is full. Never lavish money upon shining trifles to make a fool of yourself for others to gaze at. If your conscience is honest, your affections pure, your tastes refined, then with money you may become happy, but, without these qualifications you would be lost. Cultivate a contented mind."

As they strolled back to the barn, Bob said: "Uncle, I am delighted to know that you take an interest in my welfare. It is no more than I would expect from an uncle. Only from mother, have I had anything like the sunlight you have given me this morning.

"I feel deeply all you have said and trust the God of the Universe will give me strength to shun

evil and become a man that will be an honor to the name of Royalton."

Bob led the mules to the well for water. He had his supplies and all his traps on board. On the axles of the old wagon he had put an abundance of grease to help things along. The mules, seeing the covered wagon standing before them, began to bray. Straightening up their long ears, they roared forth notes of joy and delight that were really amusing.

"I guess," said Bob, to his uncle, who was helping him hitch the mules, "they have caught onto what is up and are celebrating, being reminded of former days."

After the tugs, lines and neck-yoke were all fastened and the plain board put across the box for his seat, Bob reached out his hand to say good-bye to his aunt and uncle who stood near.

"Bob," said his uncle, "you are certainly made of chilled steel. Here you are going away from us and alone without a firearm to defend you in case of an attack of wolves or enemy that you meet.

"You are undertaking a trip that I would not like to undertake alone. Suppose someone should take a fancy to your team and tell you to walk, what would you do?"

"I'll attend to that when it happens," said Bob, "And as to firearms, all travelers carry them, that is why I will be safe without any, as they will think I have them also and that will answer."

The hand shaking and good-byes were warm ones as Bob bid his Aunt Julia and Uncle Wallace fare-

Bob Bids Good-bye to the West and Starts on the Long Trail Alone in His Covered Wagon Back to the States and His Boyhood Home.

well. Farewell, a word that always must be, and always has been, a word that makes one linger.

As Bob recorded in his diary afterward, when shaking hands with his uncle and aunt, he saw in their countenances an expression of love.

As he gathered up the lines, a feeling came over him that caused him to hesitate, but for a moment only, then he spoke to the faithful beasts before him. The covered wagon moved out into the dusty prairie road and, with a wave of his hand as he turned into the main road, Bob took a hasty glance at the prairie home with a "good-bye, good-bye forever."

A true story of life has some magic power, there is a true story of everyone's life and each day adds a page or two to its enchanting allurements. Back of every real achievement there is always a lot of determination, hard work and experience.

This true story from boyhood to young manhood consumes a lot of time; for years do not pass as quickly as do days, weeks and months. It had now been fourteen years and six months since the stork left Bob in his mother's arms in the log cabin home in the forest, where the bugle called his father from home, never to return.

Bob was no different from other boys; he had to be born, then grow up out of boyhood, before we can take him on into young manhood. The actual experiences that came to him up to this time have been recorded in previous pages. Those trials and misfortunes did not matter when compared to what was awaiting him.

To fully realize what fate had in store for Bob, one should sit by his side in the Covered Wagon in imagination while reading this story, as he drives the mules alone over the Plains, onward, homeward, back to the States where his mother and the people in the village awaited his arrival with love and open arms.

The spirit of adventure prompted him on in all of his undertakings. He had now bidden good-bye to the great West, his friends had endeavored to persuade him that the venture was too dangerous for a boy alone. Bob had fully made up his mind what he was to do, and thus nothing could prevent him from making the effort. His will power was pushing him on, while the spirit of this new venture was calling him to come.

That which reaches out to destroy the individuality of a boy or young man, is a serpent in disguise. The young men of America have before them the golden age of the nation in human achievements, and those who have the imaginative faculty, will become the leaders and builders.

It may be painful to recognize one's weakness but it should be remembered that this is the only way to gain strength. Interwoven are the threads of life, therefore no single effort or contact is trivial. One's complete life is like a picture, with a blending of light and dark, if there appear shadows in it that is no cause for sorrow or fear.

Most all young people are what they have made themselves, and their lives stand as a record for the making. No one can live without making mistakes,

and while those mistakes are recorded against one, there is no reason for making a like mistake again. One should pause in the great realm of circumstances and take stock of one's own aspirations and desires.

When Bob made the decision that the mules should haul the winter's wood from the forest to his mother's cottage, he was determined that they should do so. Of course if he had known that the wheels on the Covered Wagon were to roll him on into the many difficulties in which he barely escaped with his life, like the danger of being devoured alive by savage wolves, he might have hesitated.

Perhaps it is all for the best in the end, that one does not always know what the future holds, thus one must leave the future to a determined spirit to find the way, and as Bob drew the reins over the backs of his faithful mules, and headed them towards the rising sun, he had no doubts or fears but what he would be successful.

Bob was a self-appointed ambassador for the Covered Wagon which he had assembled with his own hands. His rudder of destiny was pointed for the home port backed by his only asset, COURAGE.

Looking straight eastward for over three miles Mr. Royalton could see the covered wagon moving on its long journey.

The covered wagon in this story was a real wagon. Boys nowadays love the reality as they have been fed up on fiction until they are hungry for real life. All boys can't have a covered wagon

to ride in but all are invited to ride with Bob over the trail as he drives on.

The roads there at that time were long, stretching for miles and miles over the wildest of country. Not dangerous, for where there are birds, grass, flowers, the hum of busy bees, there should be no danger.

But the red man with his pony roamed at will and, where the plowshare had not yet felt the roots of the wild buffalo grass, there appeared over the surface the loneliness of a wilderness.

Bob could travel for hours over that dusty road and not see a house. Occasionally, he would meet a traveler like himself, who had not yet felt the sting of the inhuman bug and was on his way to see if it was really as bad as had been pictured.

They would usually pull up and inquire of Bob about the situation. It was more for curiosity than otherwise. Bob was like the gypsies in their wagons, traveling from place to place, always on the move.

In camping at night the proper thing to do was to select the camp in a low place and near water, if possible, so as, in case of a storm, to be protected by the surrounding hills. Bob had in his time, been in some pretty wild places, but he had never lain down to rest in a wild country for a night's sleep in a wagon box, miles away from a human soul.

As the sun dropped down in the west and shot its glare over the fading sky, he began to look for a spot to camp for the night. He was much more tired than he had been any night during the sum-

mer's work. His back ached from the jar of the wagon, and his limbs from being cramped. To ride on a lumber wagon over a rough road, sitting on a plain board, may be all right for one ride.

If one has the blues and heartache before the ride, after it they will be so thoroughly mixed that you will not know what ails you.

This, his first night out, was to be a test for Bob, one that he was not thinking of as he turned from the main road, unhitched and prepared to camp.

Lighting a fire with some corn cobs he had brought along for the purpose, he hung the kettle over to make tea. He fed the team their oats at the back end of the wagon.

After his meal was finished, he staked out his mules with a long rope so they could eat grass and rest during the night. He now had plenty of opportunity for meditating and planning. He sat down near the wagon after he had put out the fire. It would have been an easy matter to set the dry grass on fire, therefore he knew all campers must be very careful about their fires and see them entirely smothered before leaving the camp. If there was one spark, a gentle breeze would fan it into a flame and when once started it takes a fleet-footed horse to keep up with it, so fast does the wind carry it over the prairie.

Bob was very tired, although the novelty of camp life would have been the truest kind of sport to any boy who had a boy companion to enjoy it with him. Being alone, and out in a wild country was a different experience.

He prepared for the night by putting everything movable inside the wagon box. His uncle had cautioned him to put the harness into the box, as the hungry wolves that always prowl around a camp wagon in the night looking for a bone would be in clover had they an opportunity to get at the harness. Wolves will not attack horses unless very hungry and in a large pack. The western horse soon makes quick work of a wolf if he can have him alone and be loose.

The first thing that came to Bob's mind after he had removed his shoes and put his coat under his head for a pillow was that his bed was not as soft to his tired body as he had been accustomed to. However, he had expected this and, like the soldier boy on entering camp life, he took it all in with a relish.

A light breeze had risen from the north and it flapped the canvas on the top of the covered wagon and whistled around the old wagon box, making peculiar noises not pleasant for a lonely boy, who was trying hard to close his eyes in sleep.

A certain amount of fear crept over him as the darkness came on. He knew he had nothing to defend himself with except an old table knife that he had for cutting his bread.

He had been well brought up, as far as that went. He had been taught by his mother to always say his prayers, before closing his eyes in sleep.

His Sunday school teacher, good old Mrs. Hixson, had pictured many things to him and the other boys in the class, especially about what to do if

they ever were placed in bad company. Bob was not in bad company for he was with himself, and he considered himself good company. But that loneliness!

He had his old lantern suspended to the center bow by its handle, just over his head. The door of the lantern was open, and inside were some matches, so he could put his hand on them if he should suddenly need them.

Bob said a good long prayer, and, as he finished, he felt more safe, for he knew there was a Protector above who would watch him through the night. With this assurance sleep overcame him. There he lay under Heaven's blue sky, far, far away from home and Mother, alone on the wild plains of the great West, sound asleep in Nature's arms.

We must not miss a hasty glance at our boy as we now find him, a young lad struggling along in the world of humanity, not afraid to undertake anything, no work too great for him, if, in it, he could see any object ahead, an opportunity to better his condition and that of his mother.

'Tis midnight; Bob's young soul has been subdued by his overtired energy, making preparations for this wonderful overland trip; the wind howled, flapping the canvas on the wagon as he slept on, —the boy who was compelled to make his own way.

Bob loved his mother; she was more to him than any other person on earth, and there was not a night, not an hour in the day, but that she thought of her boy, Robbie, out in the west, working, striving, struggling to better their fortunes. She did not

know that this was his first night on his long, homeward journey. She was uneasy as she retired. "It is strange," she said, "but that boy, Robbie, has been on my mind all day. I can't think of anything but him. I wonder if he is well."

She did not know that Uncle Sam was bringing her a letter from him that would be the last one for nine weeks. He did not care to worry his mother about his long journey. It was well he did not for she never would have slept until she had him safe home and her arms around him once more.

Oh, Mothers, why are you so anxious about your boys? Why do you look to their every need and comfort? Why do you plan for them? Why do you hope and pray for their future?

Love answers the question, you need not. The boy that has a mother to protect him, no matter if he be near or far, that earnest, honest prayer will protect and give him strength to do right.

Bob is suddenly awakened from slumber. What is the matter? He listens, as he partly rises up. "I am dreaming! No! There is a fearful noise, a howl, it sounds like Indians. No, it is a pack of those hungry beasts, the savage wolves, and they are coming toward my wagon. Oh, what a hungry, blood-curdling yell."

Bob's blood turned cold in his veins. His young heart thumped as if bursting. He was in great fear. He knew these hungry demons would make short work of him if they got at him. What was he to do? Not a thing to defend himself with and they

would soon be upon him. The noise was growing louder and louder, and they were coming closer and closer.

He got the seat board and held it in his hands if one ventured to enter the box. They came up to the old wagon and smelt the grease that had worked out on the axles and had run down on the spokes. He could hear them gnawing at the hubs and spokes, snapping and snarling at each other, so hungry were the dumb brutes.

Bob's hair that was always smooth was now standing on end. He was helpless. "I must scare them away," thought Bob, "What shall I do? If I had a gun, I might discharge it and scare them away, but not when so desperately hungry."

They were afraid of fire and Bob knew this. The wind was blowing and he knew it would frighten them if he lit some straw and cast it from the wagon. It was the only chance. He thought of the awful risk of his team tied there at the stakes if the prairie should catch on fire. No, they would snap their ropes and clear themselves. He wound up a bunch of straw, lit it and threw it out and yelled at the top of his voice as he did so.

It had the desired effect, for that instant the mad creatures took to their heels and ran from the camp ground with snarls.

After he threw the blazing bunch of straw into the dead grass it was but a moment till the ground around him was as bright as day. The wind was blowing enough to do the mischief. The grass in the hollow took fire and the wind whipped it up to

a roaring blaze that swept under the wagon and up over the hillside in an instant.

The mules broke loose and ran to keep out of the fire. Luckily the grass was short on top of the surrounding higher ground, as it had been burned off some time previously.

Bob Fires the Prairie and Saves His Life from the Savage Wolves.

The flame on reaching the short grass, died out, so did the blood-thirsty howl of the savage wolves. Bob felt that he had come very close to being devoured by the hungry wolves. His heart finally dropped back into place and he commenced to rest without fear.

The wolves and coyotes of the West can never change their habits though pressed to the point of extermination. They will always abide in their natural underground home on the rolling plains until they are exterminated by man.

"Well," thought Bob, "that was an experience I will remember as long as I live." The howl of the hungry savage wolves rang in his ears for many nights thereafter. "A miss is as good as a mile," thought this lone American boy as he laid down again on his bed of straw. There was no more sleep for Bob that night and what worried him most was the whereabouts of his team of faithful mules. It was too dark to try to find them and it would not be safe for him to make the attempt.

As the dawn of the morning began to break, Bob was out on the hillside looking for his team, and as he saw them not far distant grazing, he felt a certain thrill of relief and joy. Calling to them black Jennie looked up with a whinny, came walking toward the Covered Wagon for her morning oats. His team had pulled up the stakes and were dragging them with the long rope and halters.

The fire that had saved his life had blackened the wheels of the old wagon, and the spokes plainly showed where the hungry beasts had gnawed them. Bob took off the wheels and put on more grease to make them run smoothly, this he attended to each morning before he started on his trip.

After feeding his team and eating his breakfast, the start was made and the journey resumed. He jogged along all day about the same as on the first

day and retired the second night as he had the first. He was tired and sleepy, having been up half of the previous night. He soon fell into a deep sleep, from which he awoke in a terrible fright.

He thought he was captured by Indians, who had tied his hands and feet with strings of stout buckskin and took him to their camping ground and were holding a great pow-wow over him. One young brave came toward him with a knife and prepared to scalp him.

He saw them burn his wagon and all his traps and he concluded he was done for. He was kept in a tent with an old toothless squaw, who could say nothing and, when he spoke to her just grunted. "They will murder me," he thought, "If I don't make my escape from this camp." The strings were unfastened and he was given to understand by signs that if he dared to run away they would send him to the Happy Hunting Grounds. But he succeeded in getting out of the tent and was making his escape, when he woke up.

The Indians at this time were many; they were the inheritors of this vast America, and it was natural they should resent the white man who came to develop it. They used the only means of warfare that was known to them against the white man whom they regarded as usurpers of their Happy Hunting Ground.

Bob almost wondered if that fearful experience was a dream? It appeared so real that there was no more sleep for him that night. With every noise, he would start up and look out into the dark-

ness. If he could only have had a rifle or a revolver to lay his hands on, how much safer he would have felt. But he had nothing of the kind and was left with all his fears and when that night was over, Bob did not know which was the worse, the first night or the second.

He passed the first all right with only a good scare. The second night he had that frightful dream. It might be that it was to come true. Dreams sometimes are presentiments of real happenings. How was he to know but that the Indians would capture him? He had seen a good many with their war paint on. He could but wait and take his chances. He never crossed a bridge until he came to it, therefore, never bothered about any trouble the future might have in store for him.

Next morning he was up early, arranging his traps in the wagon. The sun came out hot and dry and the roads were dusty and stony. This was bad for the old wagon wheels, as they were very much in need of another soaking.

But a threatening rain was in the sky, and it was not long before clouds began to gather. The roll of thunder could be heard in the distance, the wind had arisen, and in a couple of hours the sun was entirely hidden by heavy, black clouds and the rain was coming down. The wagon cover kept off most of this, but, being thin, it was not long before it began to leak through.

When the rain was over, everything had a pleasant freshness about it. The old wagon looked brighter, the cover was washed, the long grass at

the side of the road was washed down and vividly green. The sun was now shining through veils of balmy haze. Over to the north lay dark rain clouds huddled together like the sheep in the valley he had recently passed through.

Bob drove on holding the leather lines in his hands, looking ahead. What were his thoughts? Perhaps not worth mentioning. The mules headed eastward. They walked with a brisk step, while their long ears swung back and forth as though hinged, and well oiled. Every step took him that much nearer civilization.

The day was drawing to a close, as Bob reined his mules out at the roadside near a small running stream.

"This will be an ideal spot for my purpose tonight," thought Bob, as he saw the small brook of sparkling water on its long run to the sea.

"A lovely night is this," he said as he unhitched for the night. Over in the west were mountains of violet clouds piled against the horizon, the setting sun sending red streaks of its dying blaze through the mist, that made a picture for the artist.

After his chores were done he went down to the little bank and waded into the stream. He was in for a bath now. The dust from the roads had sifted through his clothing, and he was in need of one.

How cool was the evening, how beautiful was the running brook! Bob was gaining experience in traveling,—the kind that gave him confidence. How beautiful was all about him. Nature was certainly

at her best. The dying grass swayed back and forth in the gentle breeze across the big prairie, looking like the waves on the ocean.

He was not going to fret or worry. Worry wears upon the brain as dropping water wears away a stone. Bob would not allow events to depress him, no matter of what kind. Difficulties, after all, are only things to battle and to vanquish.

Life is meant for happiness, and to be happy one must be wholly contented with his surroundings. "Cheer up" were words ever dear to Bob. No matter how black the clouds looked, he could see on the horizon some that looked calm and peaceful.

Bob wishes that all boys might have camped with him tonight, out on the plains, at the covered wagon camp ground. For this eventful occasion a huge bonfire is made in fancy around the covered wagon, supper is prepared for all and what a good time all boys are having with Bob tonight out in the open under the twinkling stars. As the evening rolled on toward bedtime, Bob realized however, that his company were only dream-fairies and that he was alone.

He closed the canvas of the box before lying down. The clouds lowered gloomily, the wind was coming up from the northwest. For all kinds of weather he had but one place of safety and that was the wagon box. Allowing the weather to care for itself, he was soon off in dreamland fast asleep.

The deep silence of the dark night would watch over him during the night reflecting whispering

hopes down through the twinkling stars into Bob's sleeping soul.

While the howl of the wolves mingled with that of the wind as it swept under and over the wagon, he slept on soundly without any awakening until about 2 A.M., when he was aroused by a roaring noise like that of a rolling train or distant thunder.

Unfastening the front flap of the cover, he peered out into the darkness. All was black. The wind howled, the lightning flashed its quivering streaks in the distant sky. Presently, it began to rain.

Bob lit his lantern to make a little light in the wagon, so the sharp lightning would not look so bright. Hanging the light to one of the bows that held the canvas, he thought the storm would not amount to much, only a rain storm.

But there was that fearful roar, and it came closer and closer. It appeared to roar with pealing blasts of thunder, and sharp flashes of lightning, that seemed enough to cause fearful dread in the very soul of anyone. The canvas on the covered wagon was whipping the bows as though it would tear loose at any moment.

Without further warning the rain descended as though the roof of the heavens had slid away and released it. A moment later Bob and his covered wagon were traveling through the air. It was a tornado and fearful in its power as it swept past.

Luckily, for Bob, he was not camped in the direct path of the cyclone, for, if he had been, there would have been nothing left of his wagon or perhaps of himself.

What matter how the night behaved with the mighty elements clashing in the air, the roaring wind and beating storm against Bob's Covered Wagon, no matter, he would not turn back.

Bob certainly received a good wetting and shaking up when the old covered wagon was blown over on its side, spilling out all of his traps. He was wet through to the skin, and a very much frightened boy. His straw bed, food box and sacks of oats for the mules were all strewed over the ground. The small stream he had bathed in the night before was now double its size and, as it rushed down between its banks, Bob concluded that, after all, it was some good to have the old wagon soaked again.

It was still dark when the storm had passed and the clouds had ceased their weeping. Bob walked back, bare headed, through the wet grass to see if his faithful team was safe when both of the mules whinnied at his approach as much as to say, "We are all right." Their black coats were glistening with water.

One who has never spent a night alone in a wild lonely place amid thunder, lightning, wind and rain, knows not the feeling of dreadful silent loneliness that came into Bob's young heart that night.

Going back to his wagon, lying on its side, he commenced to pull out the bows. Two of them were broken and the canvas was badly torn.

Tipping the wheels over he pushed them down into the swollen stream for another soaking while he repaired the canvas covering and bows. After about two hours' work, he pulled the wagon wheels from

the stream with one of the mules, and lifted the box back on the wagon wheels, put the bows back in place, tied on the canvas covering and led up his team for their breakfast.

The night's experience was a new feature in the drama that Bob had not calculated upon. There was the vast loneliness of the wild plains, miles and miles with nothing to see but the blue sky and the rolling hills and valleys, waiting for the hand of man to bring it under cultivation, to grow food for the nation.

The white man's blood asserted itself when he began to see the light of this fascinating region of the plains of the great Western prairies which has now been developed into a marvelous enchanting paradise, that is repaying to the white man in full measures of golden grain his efforts and determined will power in bringing this beauty of all outdoor under cultivation.

One may turn back in fancy to the days of our grandfathers and see the brave pioneers driving over this overland trail with all of their belongings in a covered wagon, headed for the great West, lured by the hope of better homes in a virgin land.

The experience that came to Bob that night was one that nearly took all the wind out of his sails. While his team were eating their breakfast, he sat down to meditate and collect his thoughts.

"I have traveled three days. I must at least have covered eighty miles, have had three nights' experience that I will not soon forget." The great drama of human life is made up of thrills, joy and disap-

pointments, as they come into the lives of each one. Hope and anticipation with the spirit to do, simply overcomes them.

This was a severe test for Bob, and it was well that he could not penetrate the future for, had he done so, this story would have never seen light. His journey would never have been completed.

Bob Royalton was not the kind to give up, although he was having experiences he had not planned for. He could not and would not consent when the feeling came to him to turn back. No, he had bade farewell to the West, and come what might, he would press on, forward, homeward.

"I came out of my midnight experiences on top, if I was under the box when I landed. I will drive on until fate turns me into a worse tide," he said.

As the sun rose over the prairie with its warmth, his heart was strengthened to the extent of overcoming some of the cold disappointments he had only recently met.

Traveling alone was dreary for him. For days he could converse with no one. He became accustomed to it and, as the mules toiled along over the dusty road, he made plans enough to move mountains, build railroads and become President of the United States.

What will a boy not plan? What will he not think of when thrown on his own resources? He wants the best. He will not be second if he can be first. If by his work and plans he may succeed, to that end will he strive.

He could see now as he rode along an occasional

sod hut, built, perhaps, by some thrifty fellow, who went west and took up a homestead. Bob had a curiosity to see both sides of things, so one day as he drove by one of these sod houses, he stopped in front and, getting out of the wagon, proceeded to the door, made of rough boards. He knocked, and not receiving any reply, opened the door.

It appeared some fellow had been living there, "batching" it. It may be someone who had gone west to procure a home for his best girl and had gone back to the States for her, he thought.

The door was held shut by an old rusty plowshare, leaning against it from the outside. There was a pair of old boots standing on the floor near the plain table. A pile of rubbish and ashes from the bachelor's table had accumulated on the hearth of the rusty old stove.

The stove pipe ran out through the sods on the side of the room. Some corn was lying in one corner, evidently to be used for fuel. An old table stood at one corner with a skillet resting on the end nearest the stove. It looked as though a piece of soap would brighten up its appearance.

The bed was a small, cheap affair, and its covering rather darkened from wear. An old clock that had not told time since its owner had left was sitting on the top of the cupboard. There was one window and a square hole cut in the door with a pane of glass served to let in light and air. Anyone taking one peep at the inside of this western home would evidently conclude that the owner was keeping "batch" in true bachelor style.

Everything went well for a time, and Bob was getting more accustomed to camp life. At about five o'clock in the afternoon he halted his team at a small cross-road town. There was a general store and post office combined, and a few other shops. Bob halted in front of the store, and, getting out of the wagon, went inside for a few food supplies. When he came out there were two tough-looking fellows gazing at his team. He saw them peeking into the wagon.

"You had better keep your nose out of there or you are liable to get hurt," said Bob, who felt very much like resenting the impudence of the fellows.

"Is that team for sale?"

"If it were, I would not be driving them," said Bob.

"I like the looks of them," said the ruffian.

Bob inquired from the one-horse grocery man how far it was to the creek, as he wanted to camp. Learning it was about three miles he started off to get camped before night. He passed the evening at his camp fire, and retired as usual.

He did not like the looks of those two fellows at Jones Corners. He believed they would do anything mean to accomplish what they wished. He did not know that they had followed him. Had he known this he would not have rolled himself up in his blanket so unconcernedly.

When he woke in the morning his team was gone. The harness was in the wagon, and that was safe as well as the wagon and the rest of his few traps.

Bob knew they had not broken loose. In fact he could trust them to stay near the wagon without being hitched at all. He made up his mind at once that those fellows had his team.

Going back on foot, as fast as he could to Jones Corners, he inquired about these men, and received the information that they were horse traders and cattle men. He learned that they made their headquarters down the river about two miles from the road.

He gave no alarm nor did he tell anyone about his missing team. It was early in the morning when he reached Jones Corners to ask for information. Bob went back in all haste to his wagon, drew the front curtain shut and pinned a note on the outside which read, "This wagon and contents are private property, keep your nose out or you may lose it. By order of Bob Royalton."

"There now," he thought, "if anyone wishes to investigate the contents before I get back, he will read that note first."

A narrow roadway wound its path along the river bank, and had one seen Bob that morning, they would have seen him making fast time toward the home of the horse-thieves. It was not long before he came to the corral.

He could see a tent near by located under the trees, and he concluded that the men were asleep inside, so it would be best for him to make as little noise as possible. He jumped over into the corral and under a shed of old straw he saw the mules tied to a post. Without any ceremony he led them

out. Bounding up on the back of Jennie, he was soon off on a gallop, leading the other.

When he reached the wagon the mules were soon hitched up and Bob left that neighborhood as fast as possible.

"Well, those fellows are not the whole thing or the only persons that like the looks of my team."

Bob pulled out of the main road about ten o'clock and gave his team a good feed and then prepared and ate his breakfast.

"I am having more experience, and I would certainly have the law on those hounds had I time to deal with them. I am out of it and will just keep out by going on."

He was having experiences that would bring his character to a finer focus. He would no more believe or have anything to do with a stranger than he would with a rattlesnake. He was his own counsellor and adviser. He was growing up strong and had a well-balanced head on his shoulders, for a boy.

The disappointments he had overcome all through life were not always of his own making.

Bob had lived on boiled potatoes and bread a long time and he craved for some other kind of meat than bolognas.

About sunset one evening as night was drawing down its great curtain, pinning the corners behind the landscape on one side and the deep forests on the other, while its centerpiece overhead was full of dark clouds rolled solidly together with a deep misty thickness that looked cooling and refreshing,

Bob drew rein over the tired, long-eared beasts at the roadside near a farmer's home. The owner had evidently lived there for a long time, as he had a tall hedge fence running around his land for shelter from the fierce winter winds.

Bob unhitched his mules and fed them. Taking two wooden pails, he called at the farm house to get some water. As he walked around the path at the side of the house, he noticed a large and savage looking bull dog lying near the well, upon the grass.

The dog surveyed Bob very carefully. Setting his pails down Bob knocked at the back door and inquired of the farmer's wife if he could have some water for his team. He would not take the water without permission.

The lady was preparing the evening meal and Bob could smell the food cooking on the stove just inside the door. It sent a thrill to his appetite and went down deep into his empty stomach.

He got the water and while pumping under the watchful eye of the farmer's dog, Bob thought how he would enjoy a meal at that table. When he returned to the wagon he saw a number of the farmer's chickens flying up into one of the tallest of the hedge trees.

It is not strange that broiled chicken was one of Bob's favorite dishes. A growing boy can make a favorite of any kind of food, no matter what, if he is hungry. Bob's regular diet was potatoes and eggs, boiled in the kettle over his camp fire; and the bread which he purchased in the different towns he passed through. We do not mention this bill of

fare in order to make excuses for what he attempted to do this night.

Bob's eyes had been turned to the top of the hedge fence a number of times since he had camped. Once he thought he had better hitch up and drive on for fear his glance might disturb the sleeping pullets in the tree. The temptation to catch one was growing stronger and stronger within him. Why this was, he could not tell.

It was the tempter, the evil spirit speaking to him, assuring him that it would make no difference to the farmer in the spring when he balanced his books if there was one chicken less.

The tempter kept picturing to Bob that the farmer would save the feed the chicken ate and it would make no difference if he did climb the tree and take one. Therefore, after all this deliberation, and to satisfy his appetite, he mounted the first branch of the thorny tree and crept up carefully. He thought the farmer was tired and carefully tucked in his bed sleeping the sweet, sound sleep of honest toil.

Bob, above all things, did not care to make any noise that would awaken the sleeper. Why this was, we will not state. He could see by the light of the moon as he climbed up among the thorny branches where the chickens were at rest. He selected a nice large pullet. He intended to take hold of its neck first, perhaps so that it would not make any noise to disturb the calmness of the night.

He was not like a fellow who could not count when he visited a hen roost. One was all he wanted.

Of course, Bob was very nervous as he reached out his hand to take, for the first time in his life, something that did not belong to him, therefore, it was not strange that he should reach under the sitting pullet for her legs instead of taking hold of her neck as he had planned.

As he did so, the pullet began to squawk and, as he went to grasp it around the neck to stop the noise, the limb that he was standing on broke, letting him down into the hedge fence with feathers flying from the chicken's body. The farmer was finishing his chores.

He was returning from the barn with a couple of pails of milk, heard the noise of the chicken calling for help and put down the milk and started toward the hedge fence with a bad-looking club in his hand.

The big bull dog, who looked not too pleasant when Bob went for water, the dog who never sleeps, but is always on the lookout for trouble, now came tearing down to the hedge in advance of the farmer, with his hair standing up straight, but the thorns of the hedge kept him off. Bob was not long in getting out. His jean pants and hickory shirt were badly torn.

The farmer was hot with rage and said, "You young rascal, stealing my chickens, you should be ashamed of yourself! If I could get at you, I would fix you so you would never steal any more chickens or anything else. You deserve a good whipping."

At this he went toward the opening in the fence at the barn-yard gate.

"I am very sorry, Sir," said Bob. "I know I have done wrong, and it would have served me right had you clubbed me good with that stick. I am no thief, have never stolen anything in my life or tried to, before, and I ask your pardon, my good man."

"You are a fine rascal, you are," said the farmer. "Had you wanted a chicken and had no money to pay for it, why didn't you ask me for one and I would have given it to you, but to sneak around and steal one! You are a bad boy and will make a fine man if this is the way you have been taught."

"I have never been taught to steal or do anything bad, and I am glad, Sir, that you caught me as you did, for it will be a lesson to me that will stay with me forever."

CHAPTER VI

HE man walked off toward the house. He had no doubt been annoyed many times by persons traveling those days and would have liked to get hold of Bob for revenge.

Advice of this kind from an entire stranger:—"If you had wanted a chicken and had no money to pay for it, I would have given you one," still rang in Bob's ears. He felt very badly, so badly that he could not go to sleep, therefore, getting up he put the harness on his faithful team, hitched them to the wagon, and drove off in the moonlight.

He had been so near getting a licking and had attempted to take what did not belong to him, it made him sick at heart. He was ashamed of himself and, as he rode along far into the night, he could think of nothing but the wrong he had committed.

He reasoned it out in the right way. "Had I been successful," thought he, "in getting the chicken, it would have satisfied my appetite, but I would have been on the lookout for other chicken roosts when my appetite craved. I am glad I was not successful for had I been, I would have been no better than the horse thieves, who stole my mules."

He thought, perhaps, he had better travel at night instead of by day, for all of his bad experiences came to him at night and, by keeping on the move, he would avoid these.

He drove on and in two hours, he came to a creek. The water had recently been very high, as it had taken a part of the bridge away. Bob could see the opening in the bridge, and the wheel marks in the sand on the opposite side of the river. He concluded that, as the water had receded, the people had forded the stream.

It would do the old wheels good to get another wetting, and as he drove down to the edge of the water, he made up his mind that he would camp on the other side until morning.

He thought he would feel safer on the other side of the stream after the evening's experience.

Bob was taking chances by driving into a strange stream at midnight, but the moon shone brightly and he reasoned that there was no danger, as it was very evident the stream had been forded.

Cracking the whip over the ears of the mules, he headed them into the stream. He pointed them straight across the stream to the other side where the wheel marks showed in the sand. There was all the assurance possible that he could get through, for a buggy with a single occupant had passed him not far back and he was confident this man drove through, and so he did, but not straight across, for there was a very deep hole to encounter if one went that way. Up near the abutments of the bridge, it was shallow, but Bob did not know this.

He headed straight for the opposite shore. The mules had gone but a short distance when it became so deep that they were compelled to swim. The wagon box raised out of the bolsters, for when Bob had made the box, he did not nail any cleats on the sides of the bolsters to hold the box in place. He, of course, did not build the box to float like a boat, nor did he expect that he would be compelled to ride through the water in it.

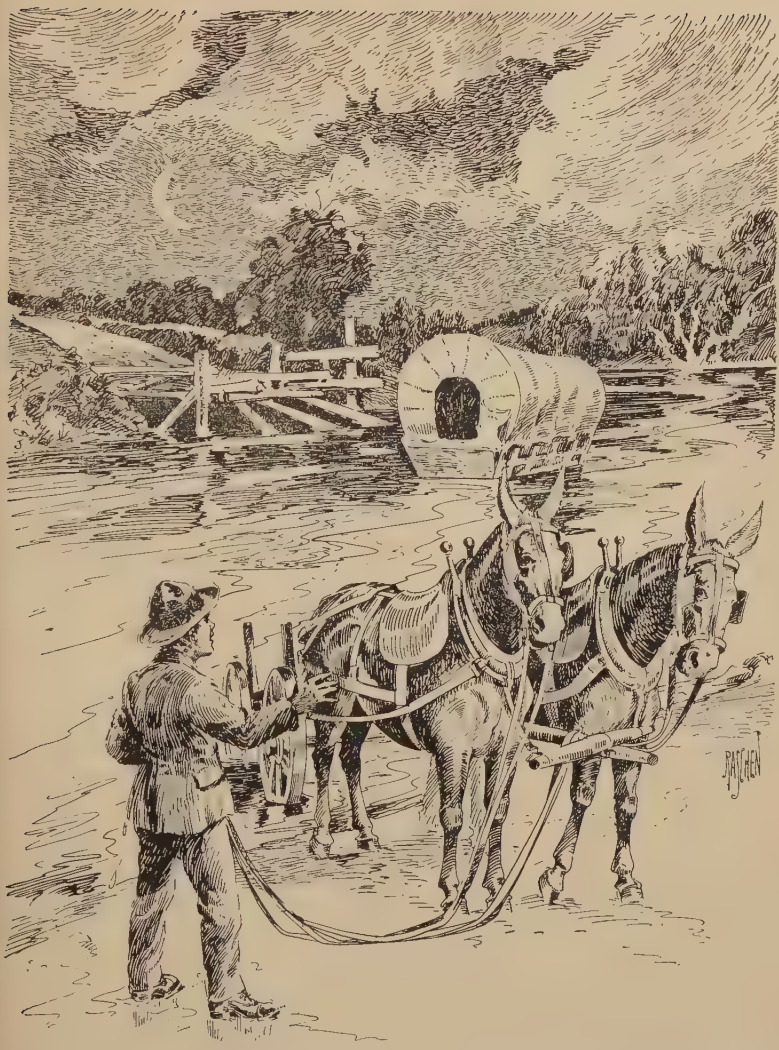
The mules swam through, Bob holding onto the lines, and, as he crawled over the end gate when the box had completely filled with water, he caught hold of the tail of one of his mules, and when the shallow water was reached by the animals, Bob was there also. It was different with the wagon box, containing his all.

Looking around, he saw the box with its white covering floating down the river. Riding the water like a sail boat, down, down, it was going and, with it, went Bob's hopes. He was wet to the skin.

Unhitching the team, he mounted black Jennie and started down the bank through the brush and weeds for some distance, when he again caught sight of the white canvas in the moonlight.

This made him feel better—nearly as good as when he saw his team hitched in the corral of the horse thieves. The braying of the lone mule, as its mate was taken down the river with Bob on his back, could be heard through the midnight stillness, sounding notes from low to high as only the gentle voice of a mule can.

Down into the water he urged his faithful beast



Bob Was Compelled to Ford a Stream, the High Water Lifted the Covered Wagon Box from the Wagon and It Went Sailing Down the Stream Like a Boat, with All His Belongings.

and up to the side of the wagon box that had lodged against some willows in the stream. Jumping off the back of his mule, Bob found the water just up to his armpits. Reaching up into the box, he secured the rope that he used to tie the mules with at night. Fastening this around the box, and to the whiffle-tree, he mounted black Jennie and started up the stream. He drew it back to where the wagon and the lonely and noisy mule were.

It will be remembered that Bob's old wagon was picked up on the outside of the shop at Beatrice, where it had lain for some months. There were many stones in the bottom of the river, and, as Bob drove through, one of the back tires worked off because of contact with the stones. This he discovered when he came back with the wagon box.

Bob was thoroughly soaked through, so he waded out into the stream, feeling the bottom with his feet to locate the tire. It took over two hours of wading before he found it. When he did so, he was again quite happy.

As Bob came out of the water onto the bank he heard the roosters crowing at a farm house not far away. It was early morning. He concluded it was about four o'clock. He had had no sleep, and had been in the water about three hours.

Taking off his clothes, he wrung them out, then gathering some wood he prepared to start a fire. His matches were all soaked with water, and it would be impossible to build a fire until he had secured some more.

It was too early to go to the farm house to get

some so he put the box on the wagon, and taking off the wheel, tried to put on the tire. It would not go on, as the old wheel had expanded somewhat, but he pounded away for some time. Looking up he saw day breaking in the east and he started up the road on foot to locate the farm house, where he had heard the roosters crowing a short time before. As he approached the house he saw smoke coming out of the chimney.

Going around the house he knocked at the old screen door with the bottom torn out, perhaps for the cats and dogs to pass in and out.

A tall dark looking man with shaggy hair came to the door and opened it.

"If you please, Sir, I would like to get a few matches," said Bob. "I drove into a deep hole down there at the creek as I forded it, and everything I have has gotten a good wetting."

"Certainly, boy," said the farmer. "Did the rest of your family get wet?"

"I am traveling alone," said Bob.

"Alone?" said the farmer.

"Yes, Sir, I am on my way back to Indiana from Nebraska."

"Well, you have plenty of nerve to be out alone."

"That is all that is needed in this world, plenty of nerve," said Bob.

"You are right, boy, and if you need any more matches, you can have them. When you get hitched up just drive up here and take breakfast with us. I'll tell the woman to put on some extra ham and eggs."

"Thank you, Sir, I will be glad to enjoy your hospitality to the extent of eating a good meal with you. I have not eaten in a house for over six weeks, and I think I can do justice to your breakfast."

"You will be perfectly welcome," said the farmer.

Bob thought how nice the world would be if all the people were as they should be, like one family. Kind to one another, always speaking a good word, doing a good deed, ready and willing at all times to help and give assistance.

Building a fire, he fed his team. He had an opportunity to meditate over his work of the eventful night, just past. As he lay upon the grass near the fire to dry his clothing, he resolved then and there never to take anything that did not belong to him.

The chicken business was the cause of the whole night's events. The impression was here stamped upon Bob early in life.

The tempter came to him and argued with his conscience that it would be all right and no harm could possibly come out of it. Bob could see now. Here was a picture for him in reality, and it was one he would not soon forget. But he thought of the tire, that must be put on before he drove to the farm house to eat that good breakfast. He could see it, in his imagination on the table.

Taking out the doubletree pin, he commenced to pound the tire onto the felloes of the old wheel.

Bob had not yet learned the blacksmith trade but he had often been in the smith's shop in the town where he was raised and had pumped the

bellows for Mr. Wise, while he pounded the iron shoes upon the anvil before nailing them on the farmers' horses.

He knew that the proper course was to heat the tire and expand it when it would go on the wheel much easier. He had no tongs to handle it with, so he must do the best he could.

It was ten o'clock before he had the tire on the old wheel and, from the work it took to put it on, he concluded it would not come off very soon.

Hitching up his team once more, he started off. As he passed the farm house, he felt that he had missed a good chance for a square meal. Of course, the lady would not care to get him breakfast at that time of day. He opened his food box and found the balance of a loaf of bread, soaked with water. Taking out a piece of bologna he ate it as he drove on.

While his thoughts dwelt on that which had just passed, he concluded that:

Honesty and truth proclaim the same motto,
In words of pure and living light,
No question will they deign to settle,
Until it is planned to settle it right.

To all those who think of doing wrong,
Keep the above motto always in sight,
For then it will make the weakest strong,
And teach all who heed it to do right.

At noon, Bob unhitched his team for dinner. Spreading out his map upon the fading grass, he measured the distance, and concluded that he was about half way over his journey.

There was the great Mississippi River to be crossed and while there were no bridges, he was informed by emigrants going west that at St. Joe he would find a small ferry which would take him over to the other side for $2.00.

Driving down to the edge of the big Mississippi the ferry was coming towards him and was about in the middle of the stream. There was a rope strung from one bank to the other. The ferry was operated by four colored men who would fasten a clamp to the rope, walking to the other end of the ferry with a steady pull. This would move it through the water slowly. The rope would come up out of the water over a grooved wooden pulley and, at the other end of the ferry, the rope would slide down into the water.

All Mississippi steamboats on the river had to pass over the rope which had sufficient slack to allow it to sink.

Bob was now coming into a more thickly settled country. He realized that he would soon be entirely out of money, but he felt no uneasiness, as it was now husking time and a few days husking corn for some farmer would give him sufficient funds to continue his journey.

The main road Bob was traveling led him across a railroad grade of the North Western Railroad. As he went to cross it, he saw a number of teams on the grade at work. The contractor in charge hailed him and Bob stopped until he came over.

"Say, boy, do you own that team?"

"That I do," said Bob.

"I am short of teams," replied the contractor, "and thought perhaps you would accept a job. I will give you $5.00 a day."

"I will work for you a couple of weeks or longer, perhaps."

Bob saw here an opportunity to put in some time and get well paid for it. He could travel any time. He could do that when no work was in sight.

"Just drive over to the camp," said the contractor, "and get ready to work at once."

Turning the mules toward the camp, Bob drove over. He saw the wagons of other travelers standing with their covered boxes, and concluded that there were others returning from the West, also short of money.

"You can arrange with the woman in the tent for your board," said the contractor.

While Bob was in the tent arranging for his board, the contractor had men lift off the box of the wagon and put on some dump boards and, when Bob came out there were a dozen men shoveling dirt into his wagon.

"Hold on, there!" said Bob. "That wagon will not do for that purpose," but the men kept on and by the time Bob called the contractor they had a pretty good load on. The spokes in one of the hind wheels broke off at the hub and down came the dump boards and dirt.

"Who ordered you men to load this old wagon?"

"The contractor," said the men.

By this time that gentleman came up. Bob gave him to understand that he had no business to order

the old wagon loaded, as it was long since past usefulness.

"I remonstrated with these men, but they said it was your orders."

"Never mind, boy, you can hitch on to one of the scrapers," said the man in authority and for a few days everything went well.

On the sixth day, Bob went into the tent as usual for dinner. There was a long table through the center and long boards at its sides resting upon some old boxes for support. These, the men sat on while they ate their meals. Men who work at jobs of this kind become somewhat rough and when the meal is ready rush to their places.

Bob usually waited until the first rush was over and took any place that was vacant. The woman who kept the boarding tent waited on the table and when she poured the coffee, took the pot from the stove and poured it as she walked along. When she came to Bob's cup the coffee pot was empty and, going back to the little rusty stove in a small tent adjoining the big one, she brought forth a full pot of steaming hot coffee.

Reaching over Bob's shoulder for his cup (he was smaller than the big men) she commenced to pour the coffee directly over Bob's shoulder. The lid had been broken from the pot and came off as she raised it.

About one-third of the boiling coffee went down Bob's neck and shoulders. Bob, of course, thought that his time had really come. He could lay this to nothing but the carelessness of the woman, or

rather an accident, as, of course, it was not done on purpose.

The man who sat next to Bob took his pocket knife and cut Bob's shirt from his body. Bob was now certainly in a very bad fix and no doctor within fifty miles of the camp.

Going back to his old wagon he crawled in as best he could. He was in bad shape. There was no question about that. His back and side were so badly burned that he could not lie down. The only thing at hand to use on his burns was condensed milk. This was taken from the cans and cloths were saturated with it by the woman who had caused the trouble.

After the tenth day it was not so sore, and as the cold weather was coming on fast, Bob thought he had better resume his journey. Settling up with the contractor, he had thirty-five dollars to start on, as the team had been kept at work, but a broken wheel was to be replaced in some way. He could get no extra wheel out there. That was simply out of the question.

What was he to do? Mounting one of the mules, he rode back about six miles. It was necessary to secure a pole to fasten to the front axle with the other end dragging in the road behind the wagon. The hub of the broken wheel rested on the pole and, of course, supported that side of the wagon.

Bob found the desired pole in a young poplar tree near the creek, which he dragged with his mule back to camp.

Of course, the people had thought his old wagon quite a curiosity, but what would they think now? He did not know and cared less. Everyone stopped him now to ask questions. He was a traveler returning from the west with his wagon "busted" and they might think the owner was in the same fix.

He wanted to reach Indiana and get up the winter's wood for his mother, sell his team, and secure some books and clothes which he was badly in need of so that he could go to school in the little red schoolhouse.

After traveling a few days, Bob camped one night near a canal in the state of Illinois. Pulling out of the main road near the canal, he unhitched and fed his team, cooked his potatoes and ate his supper.

Retiring at night, rolled up in his blanket, he counted the bright stars in the heavens until sleep overcame him.

About four o'clock in the morning, he was awakened by something rubbing the wagon wheel. Rising up, he could see that one of the mules was gone. Looking at the strap, he saw that it was broken. Bob knew that no one had stolen the mule, for if they had, the halter strap would be untied instead of being broken.

Putting his traps in the wagon, he called at a house near by and woke up a man and told him that he wanted him to know that the wagon, harness and traps had an owner, and that one of his mules had broken loose during the night.

"Perhaps the mule took fright at a ferryboat that

passed in the night," said the man. "I will see that your things are not disturbed until you find the mule."

Putting the bridle on Jennie, Bob mounted her. As they started, the black creature put her nose to the ground as though she were scenting her mate, starting off at full speed of her own accord.

Bob traveled some distance before he found the lost mule. He made inquiries, and learned that the mule was on the move, going westward.

About ten o'clock, as Bob rode down through a deep hollow and up over a hill, he saw the black rascal eating grass at the side of the road in the distance. Jennie saw her mate as soon as did Bob and sent forth one of those high and low hee-haw notes, peculiar to that animal. The feeder at the roadside heard the call of its mate and answered immediately, starting on the run, as fast as his feet could carry him, back toward them with his head high in the air.

The meeting! Oh, that meeting! It was like the meeting of two old friends, and Bob also joined in the pleasure as he was glad to find the mule. Going back, he did not reach camp before afternoon.

He found everything as he had left it and decided to camp until the next morning. He made his team fast with double straps and, about six o'clock in the morning, awoke much refreshed. The mules were anxious for their breakfast.

Driving on for a few days, Bob began to feel like putting on a little more style as he was now nearly across the State of Illinois. The next would be his

native State and he began to wish for the end of his long journey.

When the pole that held up the back end of the wagon wore down too short, he would put in another. It had been dragging for about three weeks and while Bob had been on the lookout for an extra wheel, he had not found one. One morning passing a farm, he saw an old reaper that the farmer had pulled out to a fence corner and a little farther on an old hay rake. He thought the farmer was careless to have such old tools lying around in the field after they had been worn out.

This is the way some farmers do business. It would be much better to set fire to such old machinery, than to leave them lying around to aid people in judging the character of the owner of the farm.

Coming to the house, he saw an old worn-out wagon in one corner of the barn yard. There was a threshing machine and men with horses getting ready to thresh.

Halting before the front gate, he walked in, and, as he did so, the farmer came forward and said to Bob that he was short one team and a man and if he would put his team on the horsepower and help pitch bundles, he would pay him well for it.

"I will help you out," said Bob.

"All right, I will give you $5.00 for the use of your team and yourself," said the farmer.

"To tell the truth, Sir, I can do the work," said Bob, "but I have been living on bread and bologna for so long that I might want a lunch before noon."

"All right, we will have a lunch before you start. Come with me."

Going into the house, the farmer's wife soon had some ham and eggs on the stove, and the smell of them would have been a bracer for Bob, even if he had not had a taste.

"You may bring my team in and give them some water, then hitch them to the horsepower while I eat," said Bob.

The farmer went out and unhitched Bob's team from the wagon, watered them and had them hitched to the horsepower with the other teams, and when Bob came out, after eating breakfast, his black mules were going around helping to make the power to run the separator.

Bob thought it might do them good to go in a circle for a day, as they had been going in one way so long.

Procuring a pitch fork he mounted a wheat stack feeling like work, as the coffee, ham and eggs had put new life into his body. Bob could handle bundles as well as a man, and he never shrank when there was work to be done; in fact, work was a labor of love for him. His eyes often turned to the corner of the barn yard at the old discarded wagon. He was going to ask the farmer for a wheel before he resumed his journey.

About ten o'clock, the man feeding the machine hurt his hand by allowing it to come in contact with the knife of the bundle cutter, and there was no one to feed. Usually an extra feeder goes with the threshing crew, but one was not along that day.

Bob had pitched bundles many times before and he knew he could feed the machine, as he had often seen it done, and there appeared to be no one that could do this.

Bob stepped from the stack to the separator and told the driver to start the horses. They all looked at the form of the boy standing on the apron before the flying teeth in the separator cylinder.

"Come on there with your bundles and be a little careful, Mr. Cutter, that you don't draw any blood on my hands."

Bob fed the bundles through that separator like a veteran and, at noon, the farm bell rang and Bob stepped down from the apron, the envy of all the men.

"Well," said the farmer, "you are all right. You must be from Indiana."

"That is just where I was raised," said Bob.

Of course, Bob was not a bit backward. At the table, there were two plates of chicken piled high. He thought of the last chicken he had in his hands. It was alive and the feathers flew about him. Here there were pickled beets, mashed potatoes and gravy, bread, peach and apple sauce, and a large dish of red cherries by the side of his plate, so many things, the farm table seemed to groan under its load.

Bob certainly had his fill of good things. After dinner the extra man came on to feed the machine. The wheat was all threshed at five in the afternoon and the owner of the machine gave Bob an extra dollar for feeding.

After the horses were fed and the supper over, Bob took one of the milk pails and helped the farmer milk the cows. The farmer had no boys but had two rosy-cheeked girls, who looked very shyly at Bob when they waited on him at the table. After the chores were done, Bob was invited into the house to spend the evening with the farmer and his family.

He did not accept the bed that was offered him, as he was accustomed to sleeping in the wagon, and he knew if he crawled into a soft bed, that the next night when he slept in the wagon he would pay dearly for the pleasure.

After breakfast he received his pay for the day's work. Then he asked the farmer for one of the old wheels he did not use.

"Certainly, take the whole thing if you like," said the good man.

"No," said Bob, "only a wheel."

The old wheel did not fit very well. It would do, however, with plenty of grease, as he was back into civilization and there was no danger of wolves.

Bidding his new friends good-bye, Bob was off. He had replenished his pocketbook a little by the day's work and the silver dollars jingled in his pocket and gave him new hope while the four good meals at the farmer's table braced him up for action.

THE OLD DINNER BELL

The old rusty farm dinner bell,
  That hangs to a post near the well.
It rings and ding-dongs away
  For dinner in the middle of the day.

Summer, winter, spring and fall,
It rings its glad good news to all.
Farmer in the field, or meadow lot
Is called to dinner while it's hot.

Years of rust may cover its rim
But does not hold its music within.
The iron clapper goes flipt-a-flop
As it hangs from the staple in its top.

Its notes are loud and very clear,
And good for a hungry boy to hear,
As it echoes over farm and fields,
Calling the workmen to their meals.

Out in the heat and storms alike,
It is silent both day and night,
Until the rope is pulled up and down,
Such music you not hear in town.

Now take warning, farmer boy, I say,
Do not leave the farm to go away,
For here is where life is free
As you rest under a shady tree.

Out in the cold world, and alone,
You will not find it like dear home.
You will not hear the bell's music gay
For you will be gone, gone far away.

Leave unsaid what you were to say,
If to "leave the farm and go away,"
For the music of the dear old bell
You will miss, now mind what I tell.

Resuming his journey, Bob had confidence that from now on things would go better. He was an optimist, always looking on the bright side of things, and if they did not come out as he had planned he concluded that it was, after all, for the best.

Bob had now secured another wheel for his covered wagon and he felt that from now on it would not attract so much attention from people he met on the highway. For 300 miles he had dragged the pole under the back axle to hold the box in an upright position, making a very long mark in the roadway,—perhaps the longest mark ever made in a highway by boy or man. As he sat on the seat driving homeward the canvas flopped backwards and forwards in the chilly breeze. But he did not realize that another dreadful experience awaited him, just ahead, one that came near taking his young life.

Hope is one of the greatest stimulating forces that can come into the life of a boy, especially when thrown on his own resources. It inspires him to push on to obtain the thing he craves. It may be in school, where lessons and problems are hard to master, but with hope and determination he goes forward to the head of his class, and when grown to manhood it still stands back of him, winning for him the greatest honors that can come to any determined boy or young man.

The daring spirit of this American boy was inherited by him from his forefathers who landed from the Mayflower—from men and women who fought their way, step by step, through the hardest privations. This spirit is a reserve force, always ready to be drawn upon to accomplish things worth while.

Bob's driving seat without springs, conveyed to his young body all the jars and jolts which he en-

countered along the highway. He did not realize then that he was making history,—a story that would prove interesting to other boys to read.

He had had an early breakfast. Winter was coming on, and he kept going. The frosty air of the early morning penetrated his very soul as his faithful team pulled the covered wagon up the hills and through the valleys, through a country that was all new and strange to him,—this boy who would never give up. On he drove toward the rising sun day after day, with hope in his young heart that his troubles were now all behind him.

The great drama of life appeared to be anchored with its shifting scenes to the wheels of Bob's covered wagon, which rolled on into new difficulties which had to be overcome. They retarded his progress in reaching the home of his childhood, where he knew the greatest love on earth was awaiting him—the love of mother.

Along the highway, Bob passed the entrance of a coal mine. There was a mule coming out of a hole in the ground, pulling some loaded coal cars. As the mule emerged from the dark mine into the light of day, he observed Bob's mules hitched to the covered wagon, and he pricked up his ears and brayed long and loud in mule language and that was answered by the braying of Bob's mules as a friendly greeting.

Bob inquired of the miner that had charge of the mule if there was where the coal came from.

"Yes, my boy, it is. Have you ever been down in a mine?" asked the miner.

"I have not," said Bob.

The miner's face was covered with coal dust, and on his cap which was pulled down over his long shaggy hair was a lighted torch. The miner came up to Bob's wagon, rested one foot on the hub of the front wheel and inquired of Bob if he was traveling alone.

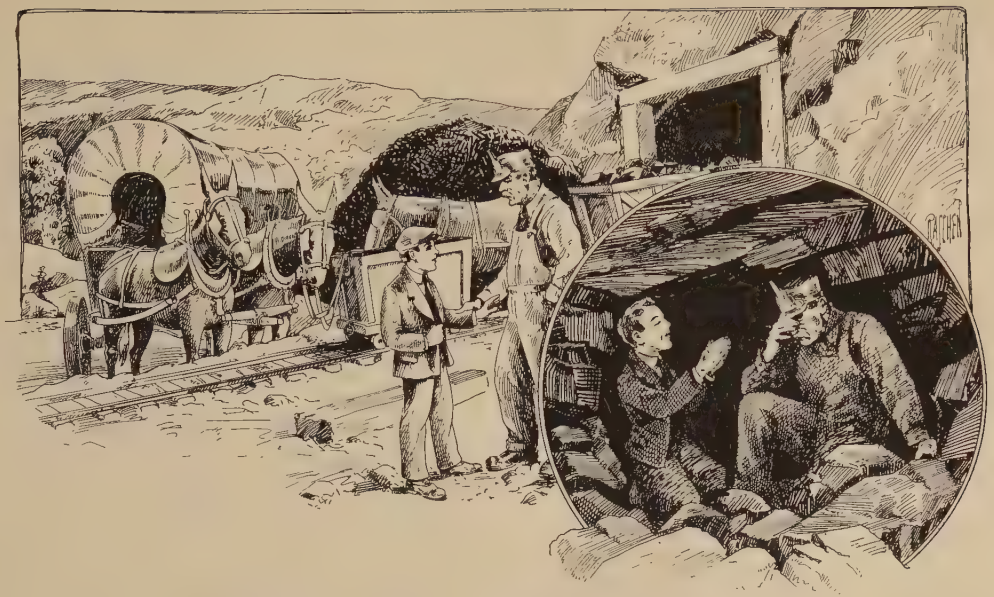
"Yes," said Bob, "I have been nine weeks on the road, on my way home to Lagrange County, Indiana." The miner was greatly surprised to learn that a mere boy had traveled so far alone.

"You can let your mules rest a spell if you care to go down into the mine and see where the coal comes from," he said.

"All right," said Bob, "that will be fine." Bob was always pleased to see both sides of anything that was new to him.

Bob tied his mules to an empty coal car and jumped into the head car with the miner, who had six cars coupled together to descend into the mine over the sloping track.

The miner filled and lit his pipe. The torch in his cap was their headlight down the dark, inclined track. The miner held in his hand a stout stick with one end adjusted over the tread of the forward wheel under the car frame as a brake for keeping the cars from running too fast in the descent. In some way this stick slipped out of place or the corner of the frame broke, which allowed the cars to go very fast. Bob and the miner sat down in the car, as there was no possible way of checking the speed of the cars in their downward flight. On



Little Bob Offers a Prayer in the Coal Mine.

they went in the darkness, turning first to the right and then to the left, and finally banging up against one of the main supports to the mine,—and the mine caved in with a roar.

It indeed seemed unfortunate for Bob and the miner, as when the crash was over they were cooped up in a small place with no possible means of escape. The place was hardly large enough for them to creep around each other. Bob thought now that his time had come for sure to be buried alive in a coal mine.

Jack, the big strong miner, informed young Bob that as soon as help could be secured men would dig in for them; that he should be brave for they would be rescued. Two long days and one very long night Bob spent in the darkness, down in the coal mine. Not a sound but all as still as death, with the cold dampness and dripping water, which chilled Bob to the very bone.

Jack, the miner, was surprised when he heard Bob offer a prayer for their rescue.

"Our Heavenly Father:

"We are confined in this awful darkness, down under the ground; the coal mine has caved in upon us, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before we are rescued, I pray the Lord my soul to take. God bless Mother and Miner Jack, and take me and Jack out of this caved-in mine and have someone feed my mules. Amen."

After Bob had finished his earnest prayer, old Jack the Miner placed his strong arms around Bob, and drew him to his breast and hugged him as his

own boy saying "My boy, Jack is going to live a better life from now on, nothing but God's love will hereafter fill my heart and home. I know that my dear wife and children are weeping and praying for my rescue, and your prayer I know will help to bring this to pass."

Thus a mere child had by his simple prayer softened the heart of Miner Jack. On the second day they were made happy by the sound of the workmen who were digging in to rescue them. Bob would call out to them for his cup of gratitude was full and overflowing, and he knew that his prayer was being answered.

There were a number of people at the mine entrance as Miner Jack and Bob came out of the mine in the light of day. Going over to the home of the miner, his wife soon had a fine meal prepared that tasted good, as they were very hungry.

To be rescued from the black jaws of death after one had about given up hope is an experience that must be encountered in order to fully appreciate how one would feel under such circumstances.

Bob was very anxious to be off on his journey; his coal mine experience, like some of the other things he had encountered would not soon be forgotten. When he went out to hitch up the mules, there were a few people on hand to see him make the start, as it was a novelty to see a young boy traveling alone over the country in a Covered Wagon.

Jack, the miner, came up to Bob to bid him goodbye, and said, "You are a wonderful lad; you never

whined once while you were down there in the mine. "It pays to be brave, no matter what may come into your life, as you grow into young manhood, never lie down and quit, but draw on your determination and grit.

"When you are grown up and become discouraged, look back to your boyhood days, when you crossed the plains alone in a Covered Wagon, sleeping out under the midnight sky, in the storm and darkness. It will give you inspiration to drive on and win the day, no matter how many things are skulking along the dark path to trip you up."

When Bob said good-bye and held out his hand to Jack there were tears in the eyes of the honest good-hearted coal miner. No matter where Bob was, no matter whom he met he always made friends, it was natural for him to do this, it was an accomplishment that he was not aware of, for it was simply his nature.

Bob was an optimist, he never looked on the dark side of things; if things went wrong he considered that it was for the best, he would not brood over his failures, but buckle on the armor to guard against the pitfalls that seemed to be ever ready to trap him.

The pull backs that he encountered did not come because he did not keep the axles greased on the old covered wagon. This had his daily attention to make it roll on over the dusty, stony highway, without friction or squeaks. On he drove, mile after mile, day after day.

Bob's mules had a rest for two days, while their

young master was in darkness down in the coal mine. He was pleased to be rescued, and he drove on with a smile, with the song of life and love in his heart. Smiles cover up disappointments and distress, like the ripples in the water which glide over the pebbles in the bottom of the brook. Nothing lifts the spirit like a smile; thus when things go wrong, SMILE.

Bob had been tossed in the storms of life with danger everywhere. The soul of a determined boy in him, was ever guided by the hand of hope, which prompted him to face all things with courage in traveling his life's path wherever it led.

The good that came to Bob through the teaching of his mother made his heart glad and brave, expanding his growing soul. It was the spark that kept his imagination on fire, to retrieve his failures.

Bob had now grown to be a man so far as experience in traveling went, as many boys become men before their time by coming in contact with rough experiences. The author is giving Bob's experiences in his travels as he found them. He does not draw them perhaps, as strongly as they should have been, but Bob Royalton put things mildly, as he was not in the habit of making small things large, long or wide. Where a spade turned up he always called it black.

Bob knew nothing about cards, for his desires did not run in that channel and should he be compelled to select one, hearts would always be his trump. He had a big heart, and he loved to associate with people of big hearts. He had met many

different people in his year's absence from home. It had done him good. It does any boy good to have an opportunity to find just what is in him. Many boys go through this world and do not know what they are good for; don't know what they could do if they had an opportunity to do it.

Bob did not wait for opportunities. When he painted the barn, he made the opportunity. When he sold the lemonade, he made the opportunity.

Too many boys are waiting for something to turn up. Waiting for what? Some boys just start out in the morning and before night they have turned up something, while others will wait and watch. It is the boy that works and watches at the same time that will get to the front. Some boys go at things mildly and finish in a quiet way, while others are afraid to commence, always getting ready.

Some boys are sharp like a steel trap. They do not need much capital, for they invest their wits. They go about with their ears open; their eyes are microscopes and see openings and chances that are as blank as walls to other boys.

Bob's journey was now nearly completed. He was in his own state of Indiana and he would soon pass into his own county. He was longing to get into the neighborhood that held all his happiness.

What a blessing to look into the future and there behold all sunshine and happiness, no matter how dark the past, or how many thorns encountered.

Thus, we are all inspired by the goodness we see in others; the examples we see performed and therefore, look forward to the morrow with our heads up,

allowing the sun to shine into our lives with the sure belief that it will bring forth more joy than before.

The last night Bob drew the reins on the tired steeds and halted on the outskirts of the beautiful city of Elkhart, Indiana. It was the last night of this eventful trip, a trip he would remember always. He, perhaps, could not have made it, if it had not been for the deep rut he traveled in that kept him from wobbling. It gave him support while he was growing into manhood.

He had no father to encourage him, no strong arm to lift him up over the rough places. It was "go-it-alone" with Bob Royalton.

Over his head the setting sun was casting its shadows across the pale sky like vast wings. Beyond the oak trees, lay the beautiful Indiana city getting ready for its night's quiet slumber. The smoke was rising from hundreds of chimneys. Bob built his camp fire very close to the wheels of the old wagon, for the night was chilly and the snow was falling. He fried some eggs in the skillet and ate them with bread, while the clouds lowered gloomily.

He carried water from the creek near by for his team, which had finished their evening meal.

The stars shone with a brighter sparkle than they had for many nights previous. The moon was casting a faint shadow about the wagon and through the trees. The cool, chilly wind whistled around the wagon, with snow flurries in the air, making the sparks from the camp fire scatter through the spokes that held the teeth marks of

the hungry wolves. It was the last night for our boy to rest his tired head in the covered wagon.

Yes, this was the last night in the covered wagon for Bob. He had builded his last evening camp fire, and as he sat down by the side of the blazing fire, which shone into his young determined face, he was meditating on the events of the morrow.

As he prepared for retiring for the night, the fire dying down left red coals with mimic pictures of living figures to stand guard over the young sleeper in his covered wagon.

The dark blue sky was the roof over his head as the darkness of night came on. Bob shivered more from the chilly air than from any fright he would experience from the darkness of night. The city near by had gone to rest and all about him was a silence as deep as death, for the darkness of night was at hand.

As Bob tucked the blanket about him, the gentle breeze flapped the canvas on the wagon and it was some time before sleep overcame him, for there were so many things that he had wished for and prayed for, before him on the morrow,—things that made his tender heart beat with joy and expectation of their realization. The one thing most important was the surprise that would come to his mother when he drove the mules up before that dear little cottage and entered the love nest that had been a picture before him ever since the day he had left it more than one long year ago.

Passers-by looked curiously at the outfit at the side of the road, on the outskirts of this beautiful

city, that in after years, held memories and charms for Bob that were ever sacred and dear.

Here were two long-eared black mules, whose names were Jennie and Tom. They had been most faithful to their young master, in turning over the wild buffalo sod, to earn money for their master. They had been faithful in pulling the old wagon across the trail and were the only companions that Bob had had during the past nine weeks. Bob loved his team and was most attentive in grooming them each night, after the day's journey was over, and then again in the morning before the start was made.

The mules were hitched to the back end of the covered wagon, eating a bundle of hay, supplied by their young master. Bob had followed them day after day, behind the plow, building air castles that did not stand the storm of adversity for they were all blown over. The mind of a boy operates like a well-oiled machine and, when one learns its capacity, then only can one predict what it will do.

The midnight winds blew through the spokes and around the old wagon. Slowly the bright stars came out in the heavens, the brightness of the moonlight of the coming night chased the shadows from his young soul, while Bob was asleep, yes, sound asleep in nature's arms, guarded by the twinkling stars above. Bob dreamed on, of the joy that was to be unfolded to him in the glorious paradise that awaited him on the new day, of which the dawn was now at hand.

The farmer's roosters in a near-by coop bent their

necks and flapped their wings and crowed "cock-a-doodle-do." Throwing off the blanket and stretching his limbs, he could see the day breaking in the eastern sky.

Jumping up (Bob was already dressed, as he slept with all his clothes on, and these were few enough indeed for the late season) he took a brisk hike up the country road, after he had fed his team, to limber up his legs and start the blood through his veins.

Building the fire, he sat down on the wagon tongue to get warm and think of the joy before him. He was not hungry now, but his appetite would be sharp enough could he sit down at his mother's table for the morning meal.

It was a breezy morning after the chilly night. Fleecy clouds were driven rapidly across the dark blue sky. Overhead the birds had ceased their joyous songs in the chill air, while the snow flurries were growing stronger.

It was a morning to live in, to enjoy, to take into one's lungs in deep draughts, until the sorrows of life and its cares were forgotten, a morning that lent strong wings to Bob's ambition, filling the future with hope and the promise of realized desires.

Something of the aspect of the morning was reflected in the face of Bob as he prepared for the last day of his journey. He was about the average sized boy of his age. His form was well knit, with muscular strength and power for endurance.

His face, with dark blue eyes which never looked

away from a person with whom the possessor talked, proclaimed him one who would not easily give up in the trials of life which must come to every boy and young man.

This last morning, Bob's heart bubbled over with cheer. He talked to himself, asked himself questions, answered them as if there were three or four of him instead of one.

For the past year Bob had been like a piece of rubber stretched to a tension, sometimes almost to the breaking point. Now came the reaction as he neared home.

His trip had brought him wonders in experience, things that looked almost impossible, so that he could scarcely believe his own eyes. Time will ever bring events of the morrow before us today.

One may even when grown up to manhood look back and there see a picture that was before us in reality when we were young. It is a picture drawn from memory that time cannot erase. There is no one who is without memories of his or her childhood, for it is a life chapter of an adult with mingled emotions, which sends its gleams back along the years.

Look back as far as we will, there is a vivid recollection of those times that come no more. Our youthful career comes before us, the old home where mother lived, the school days, the "pull away" of romp and play, the young days of real pleasure.

No matter where you may have lived or where you have traveled, there is one place that you'll never forget. It is your "old home place" around

which group memories of your young life which brought many of the finest influences to you.

Bob sat picturing the old home in his imagination. He was young when he left the log cabin in the forest where the oxen pulled the plow through the stumpy field; where the squirrels played hide and seek in the tall branches of the trees; where he first saw the light of day. That was all past and gone. Fourteen summers and winters had come and gone forever, but they had brought Bob their lessons.

Bob's Yankee Doodle Spirit was driving him on. He had a young soul that shone like the stars that dwell in the sky. He did not become faint and discouraged with hard strife and the blasts of the beating storms. Give up? no, he would drive on and win the glory that surely would unfold in his young life.

Walking down to the creek, Bob dipped the empty pails into the rippling water and came back to his camp with them well filled for his mules. Hitching them up, he checked their heads a little higher than usual, for he wished to put on a little style when he came into his own neighborhood. His old straw hat that he had killed bumble bees with during the summer, still remained upon his head, there being only a few scattered straws left of it. His jean pants had been torn by the hedge in the chicken skirmish and he had sewed them up, but they were much the worse for wear.

"Tomorrow will be Thanksgiving Day," he thought, as he sat in the old wagon box on the rough board, which had been made smooth by the

friction of the long journey. The wild geese were going to their homes in flocks and the robins had left for a warmer climate. The trees were stripped of their leaves; everything betokened the approach of winter and the snow was now in the air.

As Bob drove along, his hopes brightened, for he was in his own neighborhood. The day was drawing to a close, but he would not unhitch for there were only a few miles between him and mother, and these must be covered before he partook of any supper that night.

The sun slipped below the horizon in the west. It had set forever on Bob's trip, which would soon be over. He was now coming through the woods near the village. There were the tall trees that he had climbed for nuts. There was the bend in the creek just below the mill. He could hear the rushing water as it rolled over the dam. There was the white and frosty foam sparkling in the starlight. Coming up now on the long, old-fashioned bridge that spanned the river, how the water sparkled, the little waves appeared to bow a welcome home to Bob, as they passed by on their journey to the sea.

"Tomorrow is Thanksgiving Day," again thought Bob, as he halted his team on the bridge to take a look at the welcome sights that once were old but now seemed new to him. "Tomorrow all the world will be thankful, and I, for one, will be truly thankful and happy."

Driving up the small hill, he stopped in front of the old mill, the front door of which was fastened

by the old brass padlock that he had turned the key in so often.

Proceeding a little farther and coming in sight of the houses in the quiet village, he could see lights in every window.

Bob well knew who lived in each house. Over to the right, near the mill, there was a cottage and from the window there was a light that was brighter than anything he had seen for many days past. Driving up to the gate, the journey was ended.

As Bob jumped from the wagon and put his hands on the gate, his heart bounded in his breast for joy. He resisted the impulse to shout, to sing the song that was in his glad heart so that the world might know the love and joy that flooded his brave young soul.

He walked on to a path that led up to the house between two cherry trees. The moon was in the sky and shone on his young face,—a picture of real happiness.

As he peered into the window, what he saw made him bound with joy, for there sat his mother, quiet and still in her little cottage by the mill.

Oh, Mother: She sat in her arm chair knitting. Before her on the stand, rested the open Bible. She was thinking, no doubt, of that most dear to her heart, "Where is my boy tonight"?

Bob then drew nearer to the window sill,
With a soft step quiet, and very still,
The bright moon was shining from above
On a real boy's heart of true love.

The light that shone from the window bright
Beckoned the traveler home tonight,
Many were the rough roads he had passed
But now it was all over at last.

For here was the real cottage so dear
He could enter without trembling or fear,
Looking through the clean window pane
His tears began to sprinkle like rain.

They were tears of gladness and of joy,
That came from a true mother's boy
Who then and there made great haste
To place his arms around her waist.

We will leave this picture, the meeting of Mother and Son, filled with mutual love, so divine, it defies description, for Bob's love cup was running over, in adoration for his mother. The joy came into her heart to have her boy home tonight, she clasped him to her breast and the mother's tears flowed down over his upturned face.

Bob's mother kissed away his tears of joy as she held him in her arms, and her welcome drew the poisoned arrows of disappointment from his young heart, replacing it with hope and love, one of God's gifts to a bleeding heart. No throne can lift a boy higher than his mother's love, no sin can sink a boy beyond the true love and affection of his mother. In all the purity of this life, there is no love nearer to the throne of God than the true love of mother.

When the sorrows of life seem to be more than one can bear, 'tis Mother's gentle hand that gives a touch of hope, that lifts one on and up. All of Bob's heartaches, doubts, lonesome hours and ex-

Bob Arrives Home. His Mother in the Cottage by the Mill Is Wondering "Where Is My Boy Tonight."

periences on the long overland trail, were now gone because he knew that mother was near.

"My dear boy, what a great undertaking it was for you to travel alone so far in a covered wagon. I have slept but little, as my constant thoughts were of you. I felt after I had received a letter from your uncle that you were having trouble. Not an hour passed but what your mother thought and prayed for your safe return."

Bob's arrival was soon known throughout the small village, and there was joy that he had reached home safely. People came from their homes to the cottage of Mrs. Royalton to look upon the old covered wagon, that had carried a mere boy across the plains; to wonder at the old wheels which Bob had wound with wire around the felloes to keep the tires in place, and to realize that for nine weeks those old wheels were rolling over the stony highways, carrying a determined boy. They all proclaimed their good wishes to Mrs. Royalton in having her boy home with her once more, for Bob was also their boy.

It had been the question of the village for many days, "Has Mrs. Royalton received any news from her boy, Bob?" The papers in the surrounding towns gave an account of the daring of this young American boy, Bob Royalton. What an undertaking to drive his mules alone across the plains infested by Indians and savage wolves!

Bob made use of his team in hauling wood from the forest which he would chop after school, to be used in the heating stove in the cottage. He was

then compelled to sell his faithful team; though to see them go into other hands was an event in Bob's life that he would always remember.

Bob Royalton was a farm boy and inherited that sturdy character that produced the organization and development of this great republic by those honest, upright men and women who bred into their children that determined spirit that will ever prevail and will guard our beloved country which offers peace and love to all mankind.

We all owe what we are to our forefathers, who cleared the forests and laid the steel rails from ocean to ocean. The remarkable men who did this were all at one time American boys. What a picture of accomplishment to have framed to hang before our boys, to give them inspiration to follow the footsteps of other boys who grew up into manhood and left as a heritage the blazed trail that was perfected for future generations.

One loves to hear the call of the whip-poor-will where the green pasture delights the eye and offers real joy in living. These views are pleasant but the joy is greater if one can remember when our beloved country was a vast wilderness, which offered a real charm to our forefathers, calling to them with an enchanting echo to "come."

Had they not responded and cleared the forest and left it to the American boy to carry on behind the plow, the rake, the hoe, and the shovel, none in the cities would be fed.

Tilling the soil is a labor of love of the highest dignity, for it is work direct with nature that gives

to every young man the best things of life which we all strive to obtain.

The broad expanse of nature with its rolling hills and sparkling streams to one who has the privilege of roaming the woods and fields and pausing on the bank of the river at the old swimming hole gives a lasting memory of cherished golden thoughts.

After it is all said and done there is no life like the life close to nature, to pick the wild flowers along the shady paths and observe the little lambs like that which "followed Mary to school." The country boy has an advantage over the city boy in his development, for he is at all times surrounded and comes in personal contact with realities which in a measure compensate for the advantages which the boy of the city possesses.

The great outdoor life created and kept aglow by God's sunshine and rain brings forth its grain, fruits and flowers, and holds one with unspeakable joy forever. Where else would one go to commune with God and gain strength and health if not to the sanctuary of the great outdoors and its holy altar?

The author will give a brief sketch of the dear old town where Bob started out to win his own way, and earn the money to pay his railroad fare to the plains of the West.

White Pigeon is a name that will never be forgotten by those whose ancestors assisted in defending the small colony of white settlers, who were notified by a friendly Indian that a band of war-

riors was about to descend upon them and massacre all of the pale faces, to remove them from their hunting ground.

This now beautiful town with its well-paved streets is located in St. Joseph County on the Southern Border of the State of Michigan surrounded by the forests, streams, prairie, hills and valleys, which were at that time waiting for the hand of the white settlers to develop and bring under cultivation.

These beautiful gifts of Nature offered to the first white settlers an enchanting allurement, that appealed to the very soul of the white man who dared to face the Indians in those early days. Their trials and struggles now live in history and tradition that surrounded this old home place and find favor with the present generation as interesting to read about.

The Indian race who once owned this Continent and roamed at will over its wide domain, challenged the presence of the white man who first came to the settlement of White Pigeon, which was perhaps in 1827.

No matter what was the date of the story of their early struggles with the Indians. A strong settlement was established at White Pigeon, when the City of Detroit was a babe in arms, and the site of Chicago was marked by little more than a rude log fort in a waste of marsh land.

White Pigeon derived its name from an Indian "Wahbememe" Chief—White Pigeon. This Indian Chief had made friends in this very small white

settlement, and later returned to his tribe near Detroit. When he arrived, there was a pow-wow among the braves, who were adorned with war paint, and expected to leave the next morning to destroy the white people in the new settlement at White Pigeon.

Chief White Pigeon learned of the intended massacre of his white friends. He was strong in limb, was dressed in a buckskin suit, with wings of a white pigeon in his head gear, and a bow and arrows his weapon. He stole away in the night and hastened on the three days' journey to warn his white friends of their great danger.

"Redman ne'er betrays a friendship,
Redman ne'er forgets a friend."

With these sentiments Chief White Pigeon pushed on, fording streams, swimming rivers, heeding neither thirst nor hunger, till finally he reached the white settlement, warned them of their great danger, and fainted from over-exhaustion. Gently did his white friends care for him and prepare for war when the Indians came. The over exhaustion was too great and the brave spirit of Chief White Pigeon passed on to the Happy Hunting Ground.

Chief White Pigeon was laid to rest in an Indian mound just west of the village, and thus ends the story of one who gave his life for his white friends whom he loved. It was only fitting, therefore, that the settlement that he had saved should bear his name and thus perpetuate his memory.

A lasting reminder to coming generations is the

story of the Indian Chief, White Pigeon, who gave his life to save the new settlement, on a monument which has been erected west of the village to commemorate this wonderful Indian, and which may be seen by those who pass through the village, over the wide, beautifully paved highway between Chicago and Detroit.

It has now been more than one hundred years since the death of the Indian Chief, White Pigeon. We now take the reader back on Bob's trail and tell about his school days at White Pigeon.

In Bob's life upon the farm he came directly in contact with all the beauties of nature, which gave inspiration to his growing soul and determined spirit.

In the winter Bob attended the high school at White Pigeon, and in order to keep his time fully occupied, he cared for fifty head of sheep, five horses, ten head of cattle, fed the pigs, milked three cows, chopped and carried in the wood for the kitchen stove, filled the heating stove with coal, carried out the ashes, sifting them in a pile in the garden with the dust flying about him.

The farm of Dan Shirts where Bob did this work night and morning for his board, was located one half mile west of the village on the Chicago Turnpike Road. It kept Bob very busy to attend to his work and reach the school on time, which was presided over by Professor Plowman, with Miss West as the Principal.

In the class at school there were Herbert Hagerman, John Lyons, John Davis, Sam Woods, Lottie

Davis, Katie Marshall, Minnie Beckwith, Mary Putnam, Della Jarret, Carrie and Libbie Cooper.

There is no friendship like the true friendship of boys and girls during school days. When school is over, some stay, some go here and some go there, out into the world they go to meet the problems of everyday life.

It is one of the most cherished and dearest privileges of life, to go back to the old home after years of absence, and there meet your associates of long ago; for it renews the cherished memories that were deeply planted in the heart, in one's youth.

To shake hands and look into the smiling faces of those who were once boys and girls with you, and to talk over the good old times of childhood, are tendrils that keep one clinging to the vine of true manhood and womanhood.

IN MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE

We wish this book of life and love to carry a loving tribute to the memory of one of Bob's school friends, Lottie Davis, whose tragic death cast a gloom over the hearts of all who knew her, for Lottie was indeed one of the sweetest flowers in this community.

Lottie was married to Reverend Farrell Hart. They went to Grand Rapids on their honeymoon, then to Grand Haven, going on board the steamer Alpena, expecting to arrive in Chicago the following morning.

During the night a dreadful storm came up, which

carried the Alpena with all on board down to the depths of Lake Michigan, down in the cold cruel waters of this great inland sea.

Oh what a tragic death, what a dreadful shock to her loved ones and the entire community to have her young life so full of life and hope lost to them. Just married to the one she loved to be engulfed in the surging waves of the deep.

In a short time Lottie's Bible from which she had taught her Sunday school class, with a few of her belongings, was cast by the waves upon the pebbled shore. The author held in his hand this Bible, this loving remembrance; God's holy Book, that belonged to Lottie. It seemed to her friends almost as if her spirit had caused the Book which had been her guide in life, to be returned to them as her loving last farewell.

The angels of Heaven were there to receive Lottie's spirit from the deep, to guide her to God's white throne and to love and life.

THIS PAGE IS DEDICATED TO MOTHERS

MOTHER IS THE SPIRIT AND LOVE OF THE ENTIRE WORLD AND IS THE OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE WHICH WARNS EVERY YOUNG MAN TO NEVER REPUDIATE HIS MORAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE LOVE BRED IN HIM BY HIS MOTHER.

IT WAS OUR MOTHERS THAT GAVE US TO THE WORLD, AND WHO EXPECT US TO GIVE BACK TO THEM AND THEIR MEMORY THE BEST THAT IS IN US TO GIVE, AND KEEP FOR THEIR DEAR SAKES A STAINLESS NAME WITH MANHOOD FREE FROM SHAME.

We are now about to come to the second part of Bob's story, as he has now grown from boyhood to young manhood, and it will be especially interesting to know what kind of a man Bob made of the determined boy he was.

Bob was taught by his mother to be ever watchful of his reputation and to always maintain honor and respect for the name of Royalton. His mother's everyday prayer was, "Lord for tomorrow and its needs, I do not pray. Keep me and my boy from stain and sin just for today." That was a wonderful daily prayer for a mother to make; it was a mother's love—all that she had to give her boy.

Bob's first efforts in striking out to find a man's job were indeed interesting, the effort was backed by his strong will and determination and he succeeded, as all young men will. When Bob was twenty-one he was pulling a Convict Train in Texas, and at the age of twenty-two, was pulling fast trains across the desert in New Mexico, where he ditched the wild horses and saved the Boston Special Train from destruction.

Bob courted his sweetheart in a Locomotive Cab, and on the Banks of the Wabash. The greatest thrill of all came into his life when he received payment in full for all the hard knocks and struggles that crossed his life's trail.

It would not be possible to follow Bob in every step of his progress, thus it is hardly necessary to say that he went through such experiences as are, more or less in variety of detail, common to most young men of his age.

It was with the things that Bob lived and worked from the time of fifteen, when he returned from the far West in his Covered Wagon, to eighteen years of age, coming in contact with the beauties of all outdoors, which stimulated him as he grew into young manhood.

The reader will realize that Bob was swung adrift very early in life and the extraordinary experiences which he had encountered in his boyhood days we must leave behind. He was now looking forward to the future that was unfolding before him. His nature which met life directly through feeling and emotion benefited and improved him.

Love is the most glorious thing in all the world. Parents have great love for their children; that is only natural. But there comes a time when parents must let go of everything but love, and let the young man work out his own problems, as a young man can only come to maturity when he is thrown upon his own responsibility, as by the courageous youth the trail of life is blazed.

Part Two

Bob Royalton the Boy Engineer

PART—SECOND

BOB ROYALTON THE BOY ENGINEER

CHAPTER VII

RIVE ON; DRIVE ON; Ye mighty force of discouragement. Yes, drive on if you will. Ye cannot turn back that great multitude of American Boys, who are determined to win. They will pierce through your armored forts of despair, as the will power, and determination that was bred in the American Boy drives him forward with the spirit and fire of youth that sweeps past all obstructions encountered on his life's trail.

All boys that have grown into young manhood as Bob had now grown, are now standing on the threshold, at the open gate of the world, with desires, impulses and hope, which ebb and flow in their growing bodies, like the surging tide, confronted with life and all its problems.

It would be very inappropriate for the author to try to preach to young men in this, the second part of Bob's story, as he is no preacher. He must appropriate a page or two for a few friendly words, in order to allow some of the pent-up energy which his fountain pen is loaded with, to flow out into

these pages and on into the hearts and lives of young men, who stand today as Bob stood then on the very threshold of entering the endless race.

Bob had already discovered that Nature created things of beauty which she has spread with a lavish hand over the hills and through the valleys, the prairies and forests, in the rising and setting sun, in the flashes of lightning and rainbow, in the flowers and birds of the air; in all of her creation there is to be found marvelous beauty for those who are able to grasp the true vision of things.

As Bob stepped out into the unknown world to win his own way, all of Nature's beauties were about him to give him courage, as love and beauty is everywhere, and are the very things that keep the mind of a young man in action, to grow and develop. His education was gathered in the great University of the open road which lead up over the hills and down through the valleys, where the flowing streams of life beckoned him on to further achievements.

As a boy, Bob always managed in some way to find a boy's job. The real experiences which he came in contact with in his early life were so impressed on him that they taught him to be ever cautious in watching for the open switch, that would turn all of his aspirations into the side track.

It is at this time that all young men who have grown from boyhood should be looking forward with desires and aspirations to obtain the position for which they hope. Every young man must eventually make a start; must make up his mind that he should strike out and face the world, for the time

of play and school days will not always last, and he will not always have father and mother to lean upon.

Some of the possibilities that had been waiting for Bob to grow up were now being presented to him, as he for the first time swung open the home gate at his mother's cottage, in an effort to find a young man's job. Of course Bob started out with a load of determination in a high steam pressure that was generated by the fire of his youthful ambition. He realized that the most essential thing in his make up, was to keep up sufficient speed to more than merely attract attention, as speed and achievement were the things he must rely upon to carry him on and up.

Bob had learned early in life that the game fish were found swimming up stream against the current, and that it was easy to drift backwards with the current.

He was determined to sidetrack fate and leave it behind. He scorned the quitter, the one who would offer excuses and lie down on the job allowing others to pass. Bob was never to be found idling, allowing his personality to starve for the want of something to do, while he sat on his mother's porch lamenting that it could not be done.

Bob's mother had taught him from a mere youth that the remedy for evil which comes from idleness, was to find something to do that was useful which would bring to him inspiration to drive him on to do greater things, and as the greater things came into his life to be done, they would unfold to him all of their beauties, and that there was no duty

for a young man so great as that of finding a way to make others happy.

A smile will often do that, enchanting those who receive it. It takes but a moment to smile, and the memory of it may last a lifetime. It is the one thing that creates happiness, for none are so great and mighty they can get along without it. It is the one thing that goes out from the heart that cannot be purchased with gold, borrowed or stolen and is of no value until given. A smile only requires the use of a very few muscles, while a frown requires the use of many.

Smiling brings sunshine into your life and warms the soil for a little flower garden in the heart. The lives of young men are made better by coming in contact with others and the younger the contact is established the better and greater will be its influence through life.

Nature does not always seek to make herself popular with a young man who is not interested in his own advancement. Her work is sometimes hard; she seeks those who do things with a smile.

The writer who is penning this true story of Bob Royalton and his Covered Wagon, would indeed be pleased if he had the ability to make plain in these pages the importance of keeping one's ambition fanned into a flame and aglow, as there is nothing so worth while as your very own personal will power. If you will remember this you will be helped by this homey everyday story.

Don't forget that will power and determination create a reserve force of influence, that makes friends and opens the door to honor and success.

Discover at once that the greatest personalities are ever ready at your disposal with their wisdom and experience; take advantage of them; embody them in your own life; they will give you fire and courage.

Remember this; no matter what your circumstances are. If you have no home and are living in a third floor rented room, or in a little shack at the roadside, or are reading this in your father's home by a cozy fire, be sure to remember that the young man inside of you is a success. If you do not fully develop him, then you and you alone are to blame. Bring him out in the sunshine and show him to the world, for this individual problem means far more to you than to anyone else.

Of course you will make mistakes; everyone does, because no one is perfect. Bob made many mistakes, it would not be possible to enumerate all of them, or follow him in every step of his progress, thus it is hardly necessary to say that he went through experiences such as are more or less in variety of detail common to most young men of his age.

As you drift along in this story from page to page, we want you to realize that the writing of this true story of Bob Royalton was a labor of love, and that which we are now writing are things that every young man knows and who should be striving to develop his personal magnetism, which is not a fad or theory. It is one of the accomplishments in a young man that is more necessary than good looks, for it is his own personal charm of individual power, and is worth more than money, for it is a force that money cannot purchase.

Nothing has happened in recent years which has

taken hold of the reality in the boy, to develop in him a sense of his very own responsibility to his fellows and the community like being a member of the boy scouts. It gives him a wonderful training that is reflected in his actions and memory for life.

It produces a force to come into the lives of young men who start out for themselves, which banishes all feeling of inferiority, giving confidence to those who are timid, the very secret of all personal contact, which is one's self.

The author will not attempt to take the reader rambling with Bob over the hill tops, or celebrate the glories of a fading sunset, describe the beauties of the rainbow, or reach up to the stars and climb into "fairyland." We will continue to follow him on his interesting trail without attempting further details of his life, which would show in reality the warm blood of his ancestors which coursed in his veins in his growing manhood, which printers' ink affords but a cold means of telling.

Bob was now eighteen. He had grown to be a strong man from working in the great outdoors. He had been tempered in the wonderful school of experience, driving over the trail that was full of pitfalls, deep ruts and sharp curves. Three years had now passed since he had completed his Covered Wagon trip. His one desire and ambition was to be worthy of the confidence of his fellowmen, which would bring him honor and to have fulfilled the dream of his boyhood, to ride on the Iron Horse.

Every young man must have courage and use intelligence in order to guard against disaster, and

if one commences at the bottom he will become familiar with all the dangerous pitfalls that are ever ready to trap him. Then, if misfortune comes, as it does in most cases, he can start all over again, for he started at the bottom and knows the road all the way up.

Disappointments are only stepping stones on the life trail for the purpose of stimulating determined efforts to conquer them and reach the goal of one's hopes and dreams.

Before proceeding with Bob's thrilling experience on the Iron Horse and the romance connected therewith, the author comes to a full stop, in order to give the young man an opportunity to review the past, to determine in his heart if he is worthy of the respect and admiration; to stand side by side with the American Girl, and with a clean heart and hand, salute with her the Stars and Stripes of our Glorious Republic.

There is no question but what the large majority of our American young men who have grown up into young manhood, as girls have grown into young womanhood, are worthy of this great honor.

If there is anything more wonderful than this to come into the lives of young men, for boys and girls to grow up into young manhood and womanhood, to stand before the world maintaining the respect and admiration for each other, it must be recorded in the book of life and love.

It has been related how Bob lost his job in the mill at Scott, when he was a boy of thirteen, and called at the roundhouse at White Pigeon, where

the Iron Horse was fed and groomed. It was his boyhood dream to secure a job where he would be near the great iron monster that rolls through the country on its iron wheels. He had been informed that he was too young, that he would have to wait until he was twenty-one. This great monster of iron breathing steam seemed to call to him to come and as he departed from his home, the desire to ride upon it thrilled his young soul.

All boys love to look at the swift railway trains as they roll over the polished rails through the country, over vale and hill; they seem to fly as the birds of the air, and make a wonderful picture for a live boy who had daring and venture bred in him.

A boy, when very young, will prevail on his parents to purchase for him from toyland a railway train of cars and a locomotive which he can wind up which will pull the train in a circle around the room. It is a natural instinct for a live boy to be associated with action, with the thing that will move by its own power.

"Three years more," thought Bob, "That's a long time to wait, and as tomorrow is my eighteenth birthday, I am going to secure a job tomorrow of riding on the Iron Horse." Bob was determined and determination and will power are half the battle. The next morning Bob dressed in his best clothes, shined his shoes and boarded the train for Elkhart, the main headquarters of the big Lake Shore Railroad. Here is to the young man who is using his determination to develop his aspirations; he will have the love star of honor to cast its rays of light

over the dark paths encountered on his upward climb.

It was the same train that had carried Bob to Chicago, on his western trip, when he was fourteen, a mere lad going West for fortune and fame.

When the train pulled into the depot, Bob alighted and walked forward to the engine and inquired from the engineer the name of the man who hired the firemen on the road. He was informed but the engineer stated that they did not hire any one who was under twenty-one.

Bob stood on the platform as the train pulled out for Chicago. He was in a strange city, among strangers, looking for a job. Three years previous he had camped in his covered wagon for the last night of his long trip, on the outskirts of this beautiful city. His dreams carried him through the night and in the morning the chilly air gave him inspiration to do the things he had planned to do the day before.

Three years had now passed and if he was not twenty-one it was not his fault. While Bob was thus meditating about the job he was about to apply for and secure, a special train drew in from Chicago. The iron horse that had made the fast run, came to a standstill, pulsating with life and energy to be off. The tone of its silvery bell that rang out in the country air, became quiet, the exhaust from the air pump that came forth from the engine stack was as regular as the beat of his young heart.

The polished steel that composed this iron beauty

shone in the quivering sunlight; the cab and tender, all new and bright with gold stripes, was indeed an attractive picture for Bob, the farm boy, to behold. He was now about to make a start, an effort to secure a position to work and ride on the iron horse, and to master its control as its engineer, a position, of great responsibility.

The General Manager of the road stepped from his private car and gave Bob a smile as he passed on to the engine, where the conductor was comparing time with the engineer. Bob did not envy the General Manager, but thought he was indeed a fortunate man to be able to travel in a special car. He did not then know that this man who was shaking hands with and smiling to the employees about the station, was at one time a farm boy, and began his career as a fireman; rising step by step in the service of the great railroad until finally he became the General Manager.

This was a picture in reality that should give inspiration to any young man making a start to make something of himself, for it was the giving of service and the performing of duty that brought it about. Bob's heart was in the cab of that beautiful iron monster, as it smoothly rolled out of the station with its special train, on for Toledo. In the last few minutes Bob had grown from eighteen to twenty-one.

A young man came out of a small office near by and Bob inquired of him if he was in the service of the Railroad Company.

"Yes, I am," said the young man.

"My name is Bob Royalton," said Bob, "I just came in on the train to apply for a position on the railroad as a fireman."

"My name is Alfred Smith," replied the young man, "if you are successful, and I hope you will be, come over to my room and we will become better acquainted." Bob thanked his new friend, and after he secured the position Bob and Al became fast friends. This same Alfred Smith started at the bottom of the ladder and kept the time of the bridge crew, and by faithful service he climbed upward till he finally became the president of the road.

Bob walked over to the big shop with his mind fully made up, and with the best wishes of his new friend. He well knew he was three years under age to secure a position on this road, but that did not matter; he was not going to advertise that; he would make the effort all right.

As he came near the big shop he could see the tall chimney belching out black smoke into the country air. He knew that in that shop there were mammoth boilers that supplied the steam that propelled the machinery for the motive power to operate the trains on this road. When he came near the shop a policeman wanted to know what his business was. Bob informed him that he had business with the Master Mechanic, and was directed to the office. Bob entered the shop and was shown into the office of this official. As he was about to enter he saw the name of George Stevens, Master Mechanic, printed on the door. As he entered, a

young man came up to him, who inquired of Bob his business.

Bob was directed into the office of the official of the road, who looked up as Bob entered.

"Good morning," said Bob. "Are you Mr. Stevens?"

"I am," said the official.

Bob's heart was thumping in his breast like a trip hammer as he knew if Mr. Stevens inquired as to his age it would send him back to the farm for three more long years.

It was determination and will power that led Bob into the office of the official of this road seeking a position; as he stood there with hat in his hand he said, "My name is Bob Royalton. I live near your railroad and have a desire to go on as fireman. This desire has prompted me for a long time and I have presented myself to you seeking a position."

Mr. Stevens directed Bob to a chair, when his heart dropped back in place and he felt more at ease. Bob had hope now and if it were not for what that word applies, many young men would give up before they got started.

"Well, my young man," said Mr. Stevens, who appeared to look Bob over with a pair of keen eyes, as though he was looking through him out into the big shop. "You wish to go on as fireman and learn to be an engineer?"

"Yes, Sir," said Bob.

"Do you think you would like the work, and if I should put you on, would you endeavor to give the very best service that is in you to give?"

Bob promised the official that he would do his best, that he was determined to make good and all he wanted was the opportunity to do so.

"Of course all young men must make a start some time," said Mr. Stevens.

"You have been working on a farm?" asked Mr. Stevens.

"Yes, Sir," said Bob.

"I was a farm boy myself," he said. "Ninety per-cent of the railway men of the country came from the farm.

"I am inclined to give you a try out," said Mr. Stevens. "Every young man has a desire and aspiration to do a certain thing and if his ambition and desires are supported by sincerity and effort he will attain his goal.

"You must always keep your eyes and ears open, and take stock of yourself as to the progress you are making; by doing this you will then find out if you are standing still or going ahead. The responsibility that comes to men who are connected with the operation of railroads is very great, therefore in starting a new man, I always impress upon him this responsibility which he owes to the public and the company that employs him.

"Experience is truly the real test for every young man, for the knowledge gained cannot be lost. Habits and actions during the period of young manhood carry their influence on into later life.

"The big law of life is like the surging tide, swim with it and you go forward to success; swim against it and you are landed on the rocks. Always re-

member, my boy, that Nature, with whom the game of life is played, wants every young man to win, and win you will as sure as you play the game of life according to her established rules. The one who goes against Nature and pours the devil into his body, has no regard or self respect, and is soon landed in the gutter to the scorn of the community."

Mr. Stevens appeared much interested in Bob and gave him a few illustrations of the things that win success for every young man. He handed Bob an application to fill out and added. "I will put you on as fireman; watch your step and if you give faithful service you will climb as high as your capability will permit."

Bob moved up to the desk of the official and read over the application. The first question was his age. Bob turned to the official and said,

"I am not quite twenty-one."

At this he nodded, and Bob allowed the matter to drop.

"The color of your hair and eyes?"

"Your height?"

"Your parents' name?"

"Where do you live?"

"Have you any bad habits?"

"Have you a common school education?"

"Did you ever work for a railroad?"

"Were you ever discharged?"

"If so, what for?"

These questions were all answered in a plain hand and Bob gave the paper to the official. Mr.

Stevens gave Bob a note to the foreman to put Bob on as fireman. As he stepped to his office door to show Bob where the office of the foreman was located he said,

"Bob Royalton, it seems that I have heard that name before.

"Yes, I have it. Some time ago I read in our home paper about a young boy by the name of Bob Royalton. This boy drove a span of mules alone across the country hitched to a covered wagon from the far West to his home in Indiana. He was certainly a brave lad to make this long daring drive alone. You may have read about this boy," said Mr. Stevens.

"Yes, I have heard about that boy, in fact, I know him very well. You have just given him a position."

"Well, well," said Mr. Stevens, "And you are that Bob Royalton that drove the mules across the plains."

"I was that boy," said Bob.

"How long ago was that and how old were you then," asked Mr. Stevens.

"Oh, I was some boy then, which was a long, long time ago."

Bob was very cautious not to state how long ago it was or how old he was then. He had just secured a position and well he knew he was three years under age according to the rules of the road and he was not going to lose out by talking too much.

America is a great nation and is growing greater

year by year. She must have men to fill the responsible positions of trust and look after her destiny. Where is she to get them? She selects them from our young men who have been raised under her own flag; who have grown into young manhood and have prepared themselves and are ready when she calls them to come.

All of our young men have an equal chance to fill the responsible positions of trust in the business world and to carry the golden stripes of honor on their shoulders. The chances of supremacy in the great race are equal to all. Who are the young men that are to win this honor and trust? Those who are determined and do not stop at the obstacles which they are sure to meet in their climb to reach the top; who realize that honor and integrity are much more wonderful than trying to be a "good fellow."

Bob's opportunity is now at hand, will he be equal to it? He is three years under age for it. He had been schooled by hard knocks, the one opportunity of his dreams is at hand, it has come at last. It came without any influence from others, he went after and obtained it. He would show the Railway Officials of this big Railroad that he was worthy of their confidence. He was determined to reach the position of driving the Iron Horse.

The next three years of his life were three years of careful study and attention to business. Then all at once his dreams were unfolded, they came true, and followed him on the Iron Horse with exciting thrills that holds the reader's attention.

Bob was delighted as he looked forward to riding on the Iron Beauty of the rail. He felt happier if it were possible than when he purchased his team from a stranger in the West. Bob did not then realize that in three years from that time, when he was supposed to be old enough to apply for the job, that he would have his trade learned, and his boyhood dream realized.

When he was twenty-one he was pulling a Convict Train in the state of Texas and when he was twenty-two he was pulling the pay car and fast limited trains across the desert in New Mexico.

Thus the age of a boy or young man sometimes will not hold him back if he can find a way. It is that determined spirit that does not brood over failure that finds the way, for it is one's faith that makes dreams come to pass.

Riding a locomotive with an experienced engineer is much safer than riding at this date in an automobile with a careless driver who has no conception of judgment in driving over railroad crossings.

A passenger boards the train, the Pullman Porter makes up his berth when he retires for the night, the porter, the brakeman and the conductor are ever watchful of his care and comfort. The sleet and storm may dash against the windows, when he tucks the blankets about him, and he drops off in sleep while the train rolls on through the darkness of night at sixty miles an hour.

At the head of this train is the monster of steel and steam, in charge of two men with nerves vibrating with the one thought,—that of safety for

the train. The engineer in direct charge of the train is the man who has graduated from hard labor in train service, for he was at one time the fireman whose duties were to look after the steam, shovel the coal into the fire box, and be ever watchful of his side of the cab and thus he holds a very responsible position. It was Bob's ambition to be placed in a responsible position. He craved for it, for it was natural for him to want to feel that he was trusted by others.

The men at the head of the train do hold responsible positions. The pulsing, breathing spirit of the railroads lives in the men in the cab, whose one aim is the safety of the public.

The engineer loves his work and guiding the Iron Horse as a thing of life, with its speed and power, keeps his very soul on fire, as he pierces the fog and darkness to bring his train through with safety and on time for the convenience and welfare of the public.

The men who ride at the head of the trains have had years of service in the cab, and are called upon to perform a big part in the drama of American life.

Miles and miles of road on ahead, as the train speeds through the darkness and storm, with the mile posts and block signals constantly before them, through the mist and fog, through the day and night, on they roll, with the iron wheels of the great Iron Horse propelled by steam guided by the faithful men in the cab.

The public has learned to trust and love them and

when this iron charger brings the train in to its destination, the passengers go forward to the exit, and glance up in the cab, where they behold the men in whom the spirit of the railroad lives.

CHAPTER VIII

IT is a great effort for a young man to pause, and hesitate to drift with the crowd and make the decision to set up his own high standard and follow it at any cost. It takes determination, will and gumption to do his own thinking and risk the criticism of his pals. Youth must lead youth and I trust these spoken words will lead youth on with a real purpose following not the crowd but the dictates of conscience and will.

How can I better my condition? is a real live question. You have the power to make yourself what you will; you don't need a pull or help from the outside. To know about life is to live it; for it is the undertow of mystery that prompts the young man to drive on. Toot your own horn, and toot it loud, if you wish to become a go-getter and become President of the United States.

Bob was very happy; his young high strung spirit sang for joy, for he was entering on a new life that would by hard effort make his boyish dreams come true. He had fired the iron horse for two years, mostly for Charles Kimball on the Chicago Division.

Charles Kimball took great pleasure in teaching

Bob all the many duties that must be mastered in this responsible position.

Coming in one day from his run on the Chicago Division, he was handed a note by the call boy from the Superintendent of Motive power, asking him to come to his office. Bob went at once. He thought at that moment of the time when he, a green farm boy, had called at this office with a burning desire to secure a position when he was three years under age.

Bob had retained the same spirit that took him across the Plains; the spirit that will win for any determined young man, that dares to step out from the crowd and starts the blazing of a new trail for himself.

This same will power he was determined would in time lead him on to become the master of the iron horse that speeds the fast trains across the continent.

Two years had now passed and he had learned how to fire an engine and well he knew also how to keep her tidy and clean. As he entered the office, the master mechanic looked up. He knew Bob, for he was a man who knew every one that worked in his department.

William K. Vanderbilt was on his way with a special train westward as fast as steam could carry him. He owned Maud S., the great beauty of the turf, and she was to trot against time in Chicago. He had a desire to reach the great city in the west in time to see the little queen make her last effort in record breaking. Why could he not? He owned

the road, the train he rode in, and he trusted his employees to do their part.

As Bob entered the office, Mr. Stevens looked up and said:

"Bob, the engineer of engine 66 has been in my office and made a strong request for you as his regular fireman. He is the third man who has come to me to have you put on with them on fast trains. The engine he runs, No. 66, pulls the White Mail. She has just come from the shop where she received a general overhauling and is now in good trim. She is to take Mr. Vanderbilt's special to Chicago tomorrow morning, and to make the fastest time on record.

"As you know, when William K. travels he goes very fast. Now, Bob, you have been with us two years and I have never heard one complaint about you. It seems that you undertook this position to win and, if you keep up the same method of doing your duty in the future that you have in the past two years, you will soon be on the right side of the engine."

Bob thanked his superior for placing confidence in him, and walked down to the round house, the home of the engines.

He was not long looking up this beauty, the queen of the road, for it is the pride of an engine man's heart to have a new engine. As Bob stepped up into her cab he saw that all was new and fresh, and she indeed was a queen. The next morning Bob went down to the round house, drew the supplies, and began to polish up No. 66. When the time

came for the engine to be backed out of the round house, and her pilot headed for Chicago, she was as clean as a pin.

"Good morning, Bob," said Teddy, the engineer of 66. "I have the finest engine on the road and pull the fastest train in the country. It is necessary for me to have a fireman who has staying qualities, that I can depend on, and, Bob, I have selected you, for you have shown in the past that you are made out of that material that will win a man a place, no matter where you put him. I well remember when you first came to work for this company, when you entered the round house with a note to the foreman to be put on as fireman. How the other men looked you over. I knew then or believed that you would set them all an example in time and the time has come. You see it pays to do right. It pays to watch all the little things.

"You cannot hope to reach out and gain all at one bound. It takes time and perseverance to gain anything that is good and great. The master mechanic tells me that I am the third man that came to him for you to be put on fast trains with them; you will win your place if you keep this up. You will pass the men who are sleeping at the switch and get on the top round some day."

"Top round," thought Bob to himself, as he was wiping off the big brass oil can, that he had just refilled after the 66 had been oiled. "Let me see, I told the master mechanic I wanted a position where I could climb the ladder to the top round and finally become an engineer. This is climbing

to be put on this, the best engine and the fastest run on the road, and I am yet one year under age for the job."

Bob was a favorite with everyone. It mattered not if it was the wiper in the pit, or the coal heaver in the shed, all were his warm friends.

The Vanderbilt train was now inspected at the station. The conductor came forward with orders to run regardless of all trains. Mr. Vanderbilt's secretary came up and told Teddy that it was the wish of the President of the road to make very fast time.

Teddy, as the boys called him, had run a locomotive for years. He wore little gold rings in his ears and Bob thought he wore them for luck, as Teddy certainly never had any bad scrapes to get out of.

The time was made that was expected, and as the engine drew into the depot at Chicago, No. 66 had "done herself proud." Mr. Vanderbilt was just the kind of a man to appreciate an occurrence of this kind and sent his secretary over to the engine with his compliments to the engineer and fireman. Mr. Vanderbilt, with all his wealth, never was happier and prouder than Bob Royalton was of No. 66.

No. 66 was assigned to her regular run, and if the reader is a woman, she may wish to know why, in referring to an engine they are spoken of as "she." Now, all women wear petticoats or are supposed to, and so does an engine so I suppose this will be sufficient reason for "she" or "her."

Bob was now a regular passenger fireman and this gave him plenty of opportunity to improve

himself. He kept 66 polished and every part of the engine and cab was as neat as it could be made and everything was always in place.

Bob was delighted to have a little spare time that he could devote to his books, as firing the engine was not everything with him. He was fitting himself for what the future might bring forth.

One April afternoon, after he was through with his run, and his engine was in trim for the next one, you might have seen him strolling down the side walk to the post office. The wind was blowing hard and the indications were of a thunder storm. As he was about to pass a photographer's gallery, a young lady came down the steps.

In one hand she held a large envelope and an umbrella in the other. As she turned, Bob looked into her blue eyes. The wind caught the umbrella and, in trying to hold on to it, her photos dropped to the side walk and were scattered by the wind. One fell over the curbstone.

Bob saw this. The young lady did not. He lifted his hat and said: "Can I assist you?" As he handed her the photos their eyes met once more and he saw a sweet smile upon her face. She was without a doubt the prettiest woman he had ever met. His heart fluttered in his breast. She thanked him and walked away, taking Bob's heart with her.

Would fate allow him to see her again and look into those dark blue eyes? Who was she? Did she live in town? If so, he had never seen her before, and he thought he had seen all of the nicest young ladies of the city.

How to describe her! The reader would have to see her with Bob Royalton's eyes to understand the effect she had on Bob. She was just about medium height, with a form perfectly shaped. She had dark blue eyes with long lashes. Her black hair was neatly arranged under a beautiful hat. She walked with her head well up, the very personification of youthful grace and beauty.

This vision of a beautiful woman haunted Bob. She was always before him. When he saw other women he thought there were none that equalled her in grace, form and carriage.

Would he ever see her again? Only just one look, and then the sweet smile she gave him! Oh, women! You can rule the world if you only know it. You are the flowers by the wayside, the purest and sweetest of violets, that make men, just by a look kneel at your feet.

Bob reached over the curb and picked up the photo and was glad the owner did not know it was there. He slipped it inside his pocket and buttoned up his coat and knew it was safe. "A photographer always gives thirteen pictures," thought Bob, "And this young lady still has her dozen and I the thirteenth one. This, being an odd one, I am really glad I have it, as I would not wish any ill luck to come to that queen of womanhood, through that 13th picture."

Bob carried this picture next morning down to the round house. In the cab of 66, as he pulled off his coat to fold it, before putting it into the clothes box, the picture dropped on the deck of the cab.

"Hello," said Teddy. "What is that, Bob?"

"The picture of the most beautiful woman I ever saw."

"Whose is it?" asked Teddy.

"That's what I don't know," said Bob, "I found it."

"Well, don't get the girls too much into your head for a while yet. I will tell you the first experience I had of letting my head run off with me. It was many years ago. I had been promoted to be an engineer and was running on the New York Central. I met a young lady who lived in Syracuse, one of the towns we passed through, and I will admit I was quite sweet on her. One day I was on the freight train, and we were doing some switching in this town. Of course she knew the number of my engine and the sound of the whistle and the ring of the bell.

"That day I saw her coming down the street, and, of course, I wanted to know that she saw me, and instead of looking ahead to see if the switch was all right, my thoughts were with her, but when the engine went clear off the switch in broad day light and delayed a passenger train, I came to my senses.

"Then after they put me back to firing again for that mishap, I came to my senses very considerably.

"No, Sir, don't let a woman run away with your head."

Bob, of course, was very much interested in the engineer's frank statement, but it did not change his

mind regarding that young woman. How was he to learn who she was? A thought struck him. "I will go up to the Star gallery and have Mr. Jones take some photos for me and in this way I will find out the name of this young lady."

Bob had his photos taken and became acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Jones. He learned from them that the woman who had held his heart was Miss Sadie Raymond, of Manchester, a school friend of Mrs. Jones.

"Well," said Bob, "if she is still Miss I have a perfect right to admire her."

She had been to Elkhart to visit her old friend and while there had the photos taken.

Bob fired the 66 about one year. His train was due in Elkhart one evening, and, as they pulled in on time that night as usual, the call boy jumped into the cab of the engine and said: "Bob, hurry over and get supper, the master mechanic has ordered you to take the yard engine and run her, as the night man is ill."

"All right," said Bob, and he hurried over to eat some supper. There are men who exercise a mutual attraction upon each other, who enter each other's thought naturally and understand one another with a kind of sympathetic nature. Such was the nature of the master mechanic of this road. He always appeared to take an interest in Bob, giving him a kind word and praising him for his integrity and good work. Encouraging the effort of his life, in trying to make a man of himself, was indeed worth much to him in stimulating his actions in surmount-

ing the many little things that he had to come in contact with in his every day life.

"What can this mean?" thought Bob. "Am I about to step on that last round of the ladder?"

Three nights of this work in the yard running the yard engine, and then the regular man returned to work, when Bob secured a few days' absence to visit his mother.

Could it be possible that his aspirations, the dreams that he had dreamed, had come true? He could hardly believe it, and as he looked forward to the future, he certainly was well pleased at what he had done in the past three years.

While Bob was firing he lived at Mother Stutesman's home where George Brown and Charles Kimball, young engineers, also lived,—she mothered them all as her own. Bob was firing on the fast train; he had a day run. Many a night, if one had passed along the street and looked into the window of his room, the lamp could have been seen burning until after midnight. Bob was studying.

Bob had posted himself on locomotive and air brake construction, and was fully prepared to meet any emergency. He learned most of all to be a good engineer. Judgment was the main thing which kept men out of the Superintendent's office explaining their mistakes.

Bob visited his mother and found her life was being spent in a quiet way. She was always glad to receive him and when he departed, blessed him with a mother's love. It was what she had taught him, when a lad, wearing knee pants, that made

him brave and kind. Bob had some business in Chicago to attend to and he decided to do so before resuming work.

He registered at the hotel across the street from the depot in Chicago, where he often ate his meals, as it was near where his run started, and of course he was well acquainted with the hotel proprietor.

It happened that the master mechanic of a Texas railroad arrived at the hotel and registered as the next guest after Bob.

The following day the master mechanic was about to start on his journey home. He mentioned to the hotel proprietor that he would like to employ some good engineers, if he knew where he could get them. About this time, Bob came to pay his bill before starting for Elkhart. The hotel man introduced Bob to the master mechanic, saying that he was one of the Lake Shore men. The master mechanic looked at the register and saw Bob's name just above his. "Bob Royalton, Elkhart, Ind."

"Are you an engineer?" asked Mr. Johnson. "I have just been promoted," said Bob, and had a short conversation with this official, wishing him a safe journey home and crossed the street into the depot.

The master mechanic said to the hotel man, "I like that young man. There is something about him that indicates ability and the kind of material that makes good men."

The official from the southern road walked across the street to the depot as Bob was about to board the train and said: "Mr. Royalton, is it really neces-

sary that you should take this train home? Can you wait until the next one? I wish to talk with you a few minutes."

Bob assured him that as long as he returned that night, it would make no difference, as he did not have to report for duty until the following morning.

As they sat down in the waiting room, he said, "On our road, all our firemen are colored, therefore, we never promote them to engineers, although, we have many who have been in our service for years, who undoubtedly would make first class engineers. We hire all our engineers. Now, if you will come down to Texas with me (our regular headquarters and shops are at Palestine) I will give you a new engine and a regular run. You will make good wages and, if you are careful and progressive, you will go higher."

"I assure you I appreciate your offer," said Bob.

"Think it over. If you decide to come, which will, I think, be a wise decision on your part, go to St. Louis and wait upon Mr. Hoxie, General Manager of the Southwest System. Hand him this card and request transportation to Palestine, Texas. I will put you to work as soon as you come, as I have three new locomotives in the round house, not yet set up, and, if you come at once, you can have your choice."

Bob thanked him for his kind offer and told the official that he would decide before morning what to do, and, if he concluded to cast his lot with him, he would start in a few days and would wire him to that effect.

Bob was his own counselor. He figured the matter like this: "If I stay and run a switch engine, it will be years perhaps before I can hope to secure a regular road engine, as seniority must rule and shape this question, so I will leave for the south in a few days."

He called the following morning and made known to Mr. Stevens his intentions to go south.

"Bob," he said, "if you get tired of the South, come back to me, and, while I would rather you would stay, I do not care to retard you in your advancement. Going on a road where you do not know the grades you must be careful in judgment and always know you are right before going ahead. Remember always that the engine you run is the property of the company and you should operate it to the advantage of the company. I am sure I shall hear good reports of you."

Bob went down to the round house and stepped up into the cab of the 66, that had come in from her regular run the night before. He had some clothes and trinkets that he wished to get.

As he sat on the seat of the cab, meditating and thinking of what he was about to leave, recollections of the past came before him, even the walk down the street on a windy day.

At this, he looked up to a picture that was enclosed in a handsome case and hung in front of the fireman's seat in the cab of 66, the photo of the woman that held his heart. What was he now about to do, going away? Would he again have the pleasure of seeing that face and beholding those

dark blue eyes and sweet smile? Well, it is a long life before us; who knows what may happen?

As Bob was thus meditating, one of the passenger conductors, Charles Coates, and Mrs. Jones, wife of the photographer, and another lady came down to the round house to see the engines. Charlie had seen that picture hanging in the cab of 66 and when he saw Miss Raymond, he knew whose picture Bob had in the frame.

Providence, or whatever we may call it, has a strange way sometimes of bringing about events.

Miss Sadie Raymond, a few days previously, had come to make a visit in Elkhart. Neither Miss Raymond, nor Mrs. Jones, had ever been at a round house to see how the locomotives were cared for. She expressed a desire to some time visit the place and see the home of the locomotives. She had related to Mr. Jones how her pictures had been scattered on the sidewalk by the wind, and while she was sure she had thirteen when she left the gallery, she had only twelve when she arrived home.

"Did you pick them up?" asked Mr. Jones.

"No," said Miss Raymond, "I did not, they were picked up by a gentleman I had never met before, who was passing."

Drawing one of Bob's pictures from the case, Mr. Jones asked Miss Raymond if he looked like this.

"Yes, that is the picture of the gentleman who picked them up."

Now, Mr. Jones knew that Bob had that extra picture of Miss Raymond in a beautiful frame in the cab of the queen engine on the road and so did

Mr. Coates. He, of course, had a double motive in hurrying the ladies up to see the locomotives in the round house.

As they walked past the board in the round house where all engines and crews are marked up, Charles noticed the 66 had another fireman marked up, but he was confident that the picture was in her cab, as he had seen it there a few days previously and it was well fastened with four large brass screws. They walked past the 66 on through the round house.

The front door of 66 was open when they passed and this turned the number plate in. Charlie could not see that it was the one he was looking for. As they passed, Bob saw who it was. He was pleased and only hoped they would return that way that he might receive an introduction to the fair one. They came back presently and the door of the 66 had been closed and fastened by the workmen. They stopped in front of the engine and Charles asked: "Were you ever aboard a locomotive, Miss Raymond?"

"No," said Miss Raymond, "but I have always had a desire to see how they looked." At this they came toward the cab, when Bob stepped gracefully from the engine and said: "How do you do, Mr. Coates?"

"Well, Bob, this is a surprise to me, I thought you were not here. Miss Raymond, permit me to introduce my friend, Bob Royalton, and this, his queen, the best engine on the road."

"Mrs. Jones, Mr. Royalton. Bob, Miss Raymond

would like to see the inside of a locomotive cab."

Charlie had business down town just then and said: "Bob, will you see Miss Raymond back to Mrs. Jones in safety?"

Bob assured Mrs. Jones and Mr. Coates that Miss Raymond would soon be returned under his protection. As he assisted Miss Raymond to a seat in the cab, she had a good view of her picture, reposing in a handsome frame. Oh! if he could only have had time to take it down before she came! Why did he not assist her to the other side of the cab where she could not see it so easily?

"Miss Raymond," said Bob, "this is not our first meeting, I believe, we met once before. Do you recall the circumstances?"

She replied, "That is the case, I wish to thank you again, Mr. Royalton, for assisting me in gathering my photos, as the wind was blowing fearfully and I don't know what I should have done had you not helped me. I believe we must have overlooked one."

At this, her eyes, that were taking in the sights of the cab, saw her photo in a beautiful frame directly in front of her. The color came into her face and Bob saw this at once, and his heart was beating and pounding like a triphammer.

Oh, if he dared slip his strong arm about her slender waist and tell her how much he loved her! Could he leave this beautiful creature and go so far away, perhaps never to see her again?

Bob said, "I trust, Miss Raymond, that you will take no offence at my placing your picture in that

frame. I have no right to it, as it was not given to me by its owner. I picked up that photo when it had blown just over the curbstone. I saw it, but thought you did not, and as photographers always give thirteen for a dozen, which is the unlucky number, and not wishing any bad luck to come to you, I kept it and put it in this frame."

Bob then thought of what he was about to do. He wished he had not said anything to the master mechanic about leaving the road. He would rather wipe an engine, or wash boilers, than go away and not have the pleasure of the company of Miss Raymond.

Bob was too manly a fellow to turn back. He would go through fire if need be to fulfill a promise, although it grieved him to think that he was going away now he had just become acquainted with the one woman he loved. He must tell her what he had on his mind and that very soon. He was backward, as this was something new to him. How could he tell her, the first time they had met, that he loved her?

A feeling in his breast so much different from what he had ever experienced before came to him while in her presence. What was it?

He thought of the experience of Teddy, the engineer, who had told him about getting into trouble with a "gal" he once loved and afterwards became his wife. Bob had no fear of running off a switch. He could court her in the cab of 66. It was the very place, as everything to her was new and novel.

"Miss Raymond, we are as yet strangers, this being our first meeting after an introduction and it has been to me a long time coming. It may be a long time before we meet again, as I have this day severed my connection with the railway company and expect in a few days to be on a journey south. Had I known yesterday what I know this moment, such arrangements would not have been made, for indeed, Miss Raymond, I trust you will excuse me if I speak frankly, as it will be but as I feel."

Looking at the picture, he continued, "Since I picked up that picture, I have often dreamed of the original, and thought she was the most beautiful woman I ever met, and to have the pleasure of meeting its owner and original makes this moment the most pleasant one of my life."

"Mr. Royalton, are you not rather hasty in drawing your conclusion as to the original of that picture?" asked Miss Raymond.

"Men who ride on locomotives are accustomed to do things right and quickly. Sometimes there is only a moment to act, when a moment's delay would mean death to precious lives. While, I admit, my case is not one of life and death, I must also admit that it concerns the future happiness of one heart that I believe to be big, brave and strong, but of which I have no control when in your presence." Bob had spoken his mind, prompted by the burning desire of his heart.

"Are you quite sure that this is the second time we have met? When you were a boy did you live in White Pigeon?"

"I did," said Bob.

"Do you remember jumping on the back of a run away horse, as the team came down from the bridge, mad with fright, being frightened by the smoke of an engine in the yard? There was a young girl holding the lines with all her might. Do you remember that?"

"Do I remember that? Well, I should say I did, for I thought she had the prettiest blue eyes I had ever seen."

Bob was so overcome with delight that he—?——? It's all right for an experienced novel writer to pen a fiction love scene. It's easy to have the lover gallop away on the back of a fiery steed, with his arms around his sweetheart.

It's quite different for an amateur writer to pictrue a love scene that was a reality, thus the writer must prevail on the reader to draw his or her own conclusions in reference to Bob's love affair.

They passed some time in the cab, Bob showing Miss Raymond the workings of the engine. Then he assisted her from the cab, and taking her arm, he gently led her out to the walk, and as they left the round house, the mighty whistle blew the hour of quitting time for the workmen. They walked and walked while they talked and talked as only young lovers can. Fate had arranged all this for Bob. It intended to put him to the test in love making, as well as it had done for him in other matters.

As they arrived at Mr. Jones', Miss Raymond informed Mr. Jones, that she had discovered the

thirteenth picture hanging in a beautiful frame in the cab of engine No. 66.

"And is it agreeable, Miss Raymond, that your picture should be at the head of a flying train, rushing so fast through the country?"

"I will admit, that it must be very fascinating to sit on one of those flying horses, riding through the beautiful country, and while I cannot hope to take the ride, I do not see any objection to my picture taking my place." That evening these two young people could have been seen in Mrs. Jones home until quite late.

This indeed was a new experience for Bob, who was now in a rapturous state as he knew he was head over heels in love with a beautiful young woman, and was quite sure of her love in return.

It required all of his will power to resist a touch of her hand which sent a thrill through his body and made his heart throb with love like unclouded sunshine. Fate had yielded only disappointments in his young life, but now love's dream painted life in glowing colors.

Bob had all through his young life craved for adventure, dreaming dreams of that which was to be, which now was about to open the magic door in his life, into this real romance which seemed to be sailing him on and on among the fleecy clouds, with a soul mate, which soul seemed to respond to his.

Bob's romance of childhood days had long since passed, for he had now grown into young manhood with his boyhood dreams come true, and as he stood upon the deck of the iron horse he was timid. He

had braved the savage wolves and cyclone on his covered wagon trip when he was a lad; now that he had grown into young manhood he surely should be more brave.

He feared no danger on fast trains piercing the fog and storms making fast speed in the night. He was now led to his doom and became as helpless as a babe in its mother's arms. It was not a red flag of danger swinging across the tracks, or the flash of a torpedo which denotes danger on ahead. It was perhaps a pair of soft blue eyes that told of love so deep and true; that seemed blended with the fragrance of the red rose pinned over her true heart.

Sometimes in every life the golden land of love appears, of which every young man and woman dream. Beauty and love make a mighty force that levels all before it, for it is a part of Nature's plan. Bob was now receiving the interest on the debt that was to be paid to him in full at the end of his life's story, for all pullbacks and hard struggles that are sure to come into the life of almost all young men.

Bob was quite sure that the love of "Phœbe's" heart was for him, for him alone. Other young men had knelt at her shrine, but they did not measure up to her demand of 100%. The song of love and life was now in Bob's heart which would make him more brave and cautious in performing his duties on the iron monster of the rail, which would lead him to his love castle at the end of each run, where his home of paradise would be filled with the sweet song of his nightingale with blue eyes.

What a glorious castle is love's paradise when love comes sweeping into hearts to make dreams come true. What is Life? Is it a story or a song? Is it not to love the good things we see and feel? It is the constant struggle to reach some goal? No, it is with our friends our joy of love to share, to see the beauties in the blue tranquil sky and to feel the touch of a hand from a friend whose love is true.

What is life? Is it in making daggers to pierce a loving heart to make it sad and afraid? Is it to go about doing things that give pain? What is life that gives the greatest joy? It is the thing made from love, in a token that is real, in a kiss from a mother or a wife. That is life.

When the time came for Bob's departure, there was a crowd of young people, who came down to the depot to bid him good-bye and wish him success in his new venture in the South Land.

Bob was loved by all his associates and when he boarded the train for the South, he took with him the true love of a woman with blue eyes, which prompted him on and up for success.

Arriving in St. Louis, Bob called on Mr. Hoxie, the General Manager, and secured transportation to Palestine; reaching there late in the evening, he proceeded to a hotel, retired for the night and was soon fast asleep.

At midnight he was awakened by a pounding on the door, and, hearing the cry of fire, jumped up. His room was full of black smoke, and in his haste to get out, he grabbed the pillow under his head,

instead of his vest, which held his money and gold watch. Leaping down the stairs through the flame and smoke into the street, with nothing but his night robe and a pillow. The hotel was soon consumed.

"Well, I have been in tight places before and I guess I will get out of this one," said Bob. In the morning he presented himself to Mr. Johnson, the master mechanic, in a suit of borrowed clothes, having his night robe on for a shirt.

He said: "I did not intend to present myself to you in borrowed clothes. It is a case of necessity, however, and I am here to announce my arrival."

"Mr. Royalton, you must have been caught in the fire at the hotel last night."

"I was, Sir," said Bob. "My money, with all my clothes and watch have been consumed in the fire. I have on a suit of clothes I borrowed of the engineer who runs your switch engine."

"Well, this is a reception to our town and State that I presume you will not soon forget. While the climate is not so cold for your thin garments, you, no doubt, have a queer feeling wearing other people's clothing.

"I will give you a note to our superintendent and I want you to call on him. He will examine you as to your knowledge of the time card."

"I am fully confident I can pass your examination on locomotive and time card which contains the rules for operating trains."

The master mechanic reached into his pocket and pulled out five new ten dollar bills, and said, "Put

them in your pocket and I will give you a note to the clothing company, to give you anything you want and you can pay for it when you earn it."

Mr. Johnson walked over to his desk and wrote a note to the clothing company, also one to the superintendent as an introduction for Bob to that official.

Bob went to the store and purchased a complete new outfit and after a good bath, he proceeded to the office of the superintendent.

"Is this Mr. Ward, the superintendent?" asked Bob, as he entered.

"Yes, Sir," was the answer that came from a big broad shouldered man, and, as he looked up, Bob saw a man before him who had an expression of determination on his face. He had a pair of black eyes, deeply set under heavy brows.

Bob handed him the note from the master mechanic. He read it and looked at Bob sharply. Engineers were scarce and they wanted them badly.

"I came to be examined on the time card," said Bob. "Your rules and regulations, perhaps, differ somewhat from those I am accustomed to working under, but as I have read them over, I see that in the main they are about the same."

The superintendent invited Bob to a seat by the side of his desk.

Bob in his easy, homelike way, answered every question quickly, without hesitating a moment. After the time-card examination was through and that of operating the train, the superintendent said: "I am through, and fully satisfied that you know

your business, and more, I believe you will work to the interest of the company."

"I can only assure you I will do the best I can," said Bob.

The superintendent wrote a note and gave it to his errand boy to deliver, saying that the master mechanic would now assign him to his work.

As Bob entered his office, he looked like a different man from the one who was there in the morning wearing borrowed clothes.

The master mechanic was reading the note from the superintendent as Bob entered and looked up in surprise at the transformation of Bob.

"I have had a good bath, and have a complete new outfit on my back. I have written home for some of my money, and as soon as it arrives, I will pay you back. I could have bought that whole store on my word, as the manager was eager for me to lay in an extra supply."

"Now, Mr. Royalton, I just received a note from the superintendent, and I must say that I am surprised at the compliments he has given you. He advised me to put you on the convict train, saying you are perfect on the time card and he believed you would be a hustler. If you don't know what that train is, I will tell you. The company hire convicts from the state at fifty cents per day. We board them and have a train fitted up with berths and dining room with iron bars at all the windows. On this train there are six guards, who carry guns and revolvers and have blood hounds with the train continually. It is a regular work train, going from

one place to another, where the superintendent orders work to be done.

"This is the most responsible position on the road in train service.

"Mr. Ward, the superintendent, has expressed his desire, in this note, to put you on this train and give you full charge. We had talked the matter over, before I was in the North, of selecting some good man for this run, and I believe, Mr. Royalton, you can handle that train with good results. You will be held responsible for the safety of this train, also be responsible to the company, who are in turn responsible to the State, for the safety of the lives of the convicts.

"You see these men are confined in their cars when not at work and are always locked up when the train is being run from one place to another, therefore, there is not a position on the road that is as responsible as this one. Do you think you can handle this position?" inquired Mr. Johnson.

"I am sure I can, sir," said Bob.

"Before accepting the position I wish to proceed to where this train is located, and look over the situation as I want to see for myself the conditions as they are," said Bob.

"I would suggest that you have a talk with Mr. Ward and tell him what you want."

After dinner Bob called on the superintendent and thanked him for the confidence he had placed in him. "The master mechanic wishes me to take this train, but before I do so, I want to go where it now is and look it over. I will stay there a couple

of days. I believe it would be best for you to give me a note to the man who is in charge of the convicts, stating that I wish to inspect conditions of the cars, and the men under him. He no doubt will think I am making the inspection in the interest of the State government."

"Your suggestion is a good one, and I will give you a letter to the foreman."

That evening Bob had an annual pass in his pocket, good on all divisions of the road, and boarded the passenger train to go to where the convict train was laid up for the night. He stepped off the train at a small station in the great pine forests of the State of Texas. At the depot were to be found the night operator and a small white haired man, who held an old-fashioned lantern in his hand.

When Bob alighted, the old man came up to him and, taking off his hat, said: "I suppose you want a hotel, Sah."

"Yes," said Bob.

"Well, I am de colored man dat runs de only place of de kind in town."

Bob went with the man to his little house, with a sign hanging over the door that read: "Jackson's Place."

"I suppose you are Mr. Jackson," said Bob.

"Yes, Sah, I am dat man and Mama Jackson and I have run this here place for many years. You may not find it fixed up to what you are used to, boss, but we will give you the best mammy Jackson hab got."

Bob told Mr. Jackson that he should call him in time for breakfast, as he wished to go out on the convict train at 7 o'clock.

As Bob followed Mr. Jackson into a small room where he set a tallow candle down on a stand by the bed, he surveyed the room, taking in the situation, and bid Mr. Jackson good-night.

He found the room clean, with clean white sheets on the bed.

Bob was up in the morning, ate his breakfast and went down to the station, and direct to the boarding cars of the convicts and found the foreman, who had charge of the men. Bob handed the note from the superintendent to him. This, of course, gave Bob an opportunity to go into the cars with the men, and see just what they ate, how it was served, also the condition of the cars.

About eight o'clock the crew showed up and started out to work, Bob had an opportunity to see how things were going. He decided that it would be an easy matter for him to make a good showing with the train. He returned and called on the superintendent and informed him that he felt fully capable of running his train.

An engine was assigned to Bob for this train. He was to take out the local freight next morning, and change off with the engine on the convict train. That night Bob wrote to his mother, telling her that he had arrived safely, and was about to commence work.

He wrote also, to Miss Raymond all about his trip and what the prospects were for the future.

Bob arrived at the station in the afternoon, where he was to change off with the engine on the convict train. The engineer had been instructed by wire to change with Engineer Royalton.

As Bob backed engine 15 up to the gravel cars, the engineer and conductor were in the telegraph office talking about the change. The engineer said, "Well, did you see that kid on the 15? I wonder if he is going to keep this run. He does not look old enough to be away from his mother."

"Don't fool yourself about that chap," said the conductor of the local. "He is a clipper to do work and get over the road. I dare say he will take care of himself."

The train pulled out and left Bob in charge. The foreman came forward and offered his hand and said, "This is a surprise to me, I thought you came here in the interest of the state to look the men over."

"So did I," said Bob, "and the railway company, also."

The expense of feeding the men had been very heavy; bills came into the auditor of the company bearing the signature of the foreman, and, on a quiet search, Bob learned a great deal.

He wrote Mr. Ward, the superintendent, to forward to him all the orders sent in for the previous month as he was interested in the welfare of the convicts as well as that of the train. He had had a great deal of complaint about the food served to the convicts and believed there was something wrong somewhere, and for the sake of these poor

fellows he wanted to make the investigation, as a man can work much better when his stomach is treated with respect.

That evening Bob informed the foreman that he had been put in charge of the train, and as he was working for the company he would be ready the following morning at 7:30 to pull out on the main track.

"I want you to have your men breakfast and be on the flat cars ready to start out at that time. If we are delayed in getting out, it will be the fault of the despatcher in not giving us our working orders in time. I would like to have you tell me every night just where you expect to work the next day."

"I will inform the despatcher, so he will know what to depend on, and what we want."

Bob soon learned that these men never had any literature to read of any kind.

In a few days Bob went into the depot one evening and came out with a big armful of magazines and newspapers and was seen going toward the four big convict cars.

The guard said, "You had better not go in there with those rough fellows. Just let them go, they are now already treated too well."

"Please open that door." The guard looked at Bob and knew by the expression of his face that he meant what he said.

As Bob entered the car, he said: "Boys, Santa Claus has come just a little early this time, but I know you will be glad to see him. I will pass through the cars and give each a paper or maga-

zine and when one is through with it, he may exchange with some other. I want you all to feel that you still have something to live for, and I will furnish you all the reading matter you want from now on."

Bob had instructed the agents along the road to gather up papers and magazines from the town people, and forward them to him for the convicts. Every night after his day's work was done Bob could have been seen going through the cars talking to the men. He soon learned that they were only half fed. The company furnished sufficient supplies but they were never more than half used, and the men could only do about half a day's work because they were not properly fed.

Bob made a full report to the superintendent when he had been in charge two weeks. The superintendent was surprised and ordered the foreman discharged and empowered Bob to purchase all supplies and to run the whole thing as he thought it should be run for two months without dictation from anyone.

At the expiration of that time, there was such a great change that the superintendent sent Bob a letter that he appreciated. He had saved about half on the food bills, the men were much better fed, looked better and worked better. The company soon observed that there was much more work done and the tracks were being put in better shape.

In Bob's position he came in contact, daily, with the convicts on his train, some of them about his own age. It was indeed strange to him to see fine

looking young men on this convict train, serving out sentences, wearing the stripes of a convict, working in the mud and slush, digging ditches and doing general repair work along the railroad track.

One need only look in the faces of some of these men, to realize they would have no respect for law, or human life. They committed a crime, expecting, of course, to cover it up or make a clean getaway. They were captured which is most always the case; some may escape for a time, but sooner or later the wrong doer is captured and he serves for years in the garb of the convict.

If the young man, who cares not for home, and the love of home training, decides to break away from those love ties, shifts around through the country, coming into contact with others who have lost all respect for honor, for home and mother and commits a crime against society, if such a young man would only stop to reflect on what the law will surely prescribe in punishment for wrong doing, he would go straight. But

"Evils are wrought
For want of thought."

These convicts on Bob's train had been found guilty and received their sentences from two to ten and twenty years, in the prison of the State, there to find time to regret that they had yielded to the call of the devil, and their associates in crime and must pay the penalty.

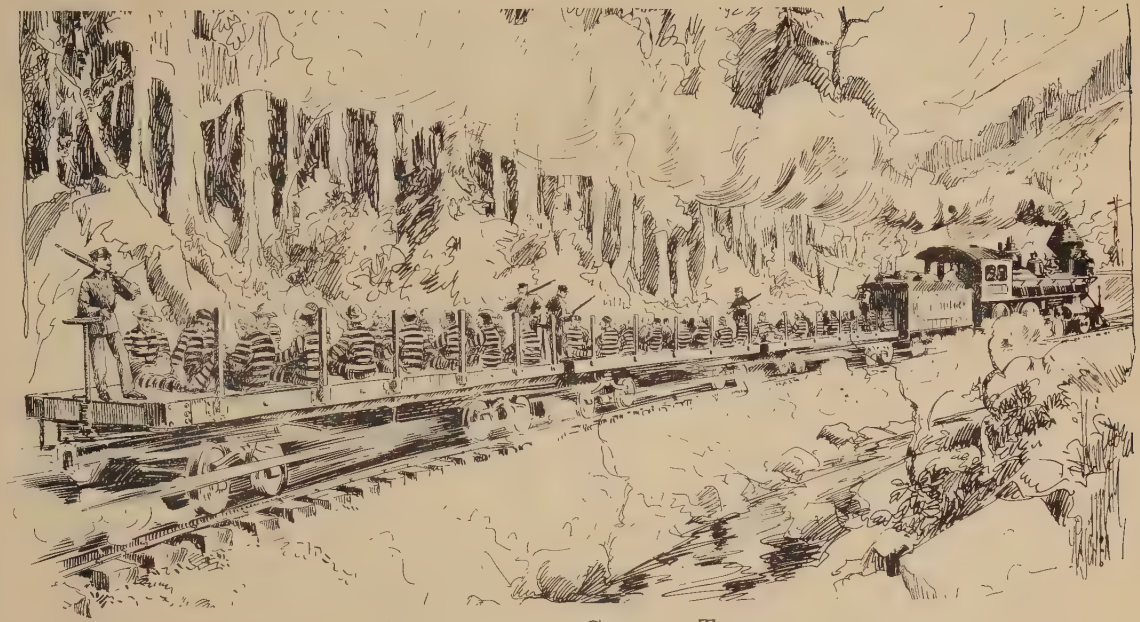
The tax payers of a State are not supposed to be taxed to keep criminals in idleness, thus we find

these men, who cared nothing for law, nothing for the teachings of mother, nothing for anything, but shut their eyes and ears and did things that their own conscience tried to prevent them from doing. Here we find them paying the penalty, working on the convict train, some of them with a ball and chain locked around their ankle.

What a deplorable picture for the wayward youth of the land to look upon. This picture is shown in reality, on the next page, where the convicts are taken to work under heavy guard, on Bob's train. If one dared to escape, it meant instant death, for the guards always shoot to kill. Life for a real criminal with these hardships, which he must pay dearly for, is still sweet, for they are always planning on making their escape. For some young criminals, who have been caught in their first crime, these reflections may go deep down into the heart, the mother's love is ever before him and he cries out in anguish, "Would to God, I had followed Mother's teachings, to live a clean life!"

Many of the convicts would appeal to Bob in distress, as they were not allowed to talk to the guards. Their appeals made Bob's heart ache, and all he could do was to encourage them to believe that all the best things in this life are ever ready to be bestowed on a clean heart and an honorable life.

On Bob's train there were fifty convicts. Their living quarters were steel cars fitted up with bunks, one mess car, one car for the blood hounds. Iron grates were securely fastened at all the windows,



Bob with the Convict Train.

and heavy iron grating between the ends of the cars.

Thus, the cars were prisons on wheels. When the convicts were taken out of the cars to work on the road, the men were marched in file to the three flat cars, and on these cars they would seat themselves, facing each other. Those who had chains locked around their ankles with a ball attached were assisted to the car by the guard.

There were five guards and six bloodhounds. At night there were two guards to parole the cars, thus, there was no possible escape and all the convicts were dressed with the white and black prison suits.

A short time before Bob's arrival to take charge of the convict train, there was a terrible accident to the train. At this time the convicts were digging a ditch in the tall pine forest, and the convict train was standing on the main track. The flagman did not flag an on-coming train, which came rolling around a curve in the thick forest. When the engines met there was a terrific explosion. The convicts made for freedom; the guards killed four of them, and subdued others. Five escaped for a short time but they were recaptured.

Great care was always exercised by the crew and guards when the train was moved from one place to another. This was a picture that was before Bob each day, a picture from real life, that would last as long as time, but this resulted from the misdeeds of others, which he could in no way change.

The convicts who desired to write home were allowed to do so if the letters did not conflict with

the Prison Rules of the State. Bob would take these letters which were handed to him unsealed, read them over carefully and, if they conformed to the prison rules, he would seal and mail them.

One of the young men who had been on the convict train for three years was about Bob's age and he finally decided that he would write home to his mother. He handed Bob the letter, which so impressed him that he noted it in his diary. The letter read:

"Dear Mother:

"I know you will be surprised to hear from me as it has been now a long time since I left home. I suppose that you have long since given me up for dead. I have many times tried to write and let you know where I was but when I tried, my courage always failed me.

"I committed a dreadful crime, was caught, and for the past three years I have been doing time working on a convict train. When I come out in ten years more, I will assume my right name, for then I will surely go straight. I would never have gotten up courage to write you this letter, if I had not come under the influence of the young man that has charge of this train. His name is Bob Royalton and he came here about one year ago from the North. Before he came we had only about one half enough to eat.

"He is a young man that worked his own way up from boyhood to young manhood as his father was killed in the war of the Rebellion. He has, for a long time, supplied us with reading matter.

"Think of it! I had all that any boy could have: education, home, love of one of the best of mothers.

But I yielded and did wrong. I am now paying dearly for that wrong.

"This Bob Royalton is a young man of pure gold, for he has shown me that a clean life is the life to live. He is to leave this train and go back to his home in the North and will mail this letter to you.

"I have promised my own heart, and made a promise to Bob, and now make one to you, Mother, that when I get out of this despicable convict's uniform of white and black stripes, I will forever thereafter live straight. My experience and reflections, in associating with convicts and paying the penalty of wrong doing, will ever hold me steadfast to the love and teaching of my dear, good mother.

"Signed—

"Your Boy."

Perhaps under the circumstances that it would have been better if this young man had not written home to his mother. He had committed a crime and owing to his age was let off with a light sentence of ten years at hard labor in the Prison of the State. His conscience had tried to prevail on him that the committing of crime was wrong, his will power was dominated by the devil and the crime was committed with his own hands, and was being daily reflected before him in shame and disgrace that was eating out his very life in despair.

It pains the author to write of sad things that came into some lives. Here was a boy who grew up into young manhood, with all the advantages of education. He had been taught by his mother to live aright. She had watched over him from youth to young manhood, which he deliberately

threw away to the four winds of the devil in crime, and now was paying the penalty. This picture of reality we trust will bring its lesson to all boys. It is a picture of disaster that comes to every young man who throws his honor and his mother's love overboard to the vultures of crime.

Bob had made arrangements to leave the convict train and go back North. This Saturday evening, as he pulled his train into the convict camp for the night to rest over Sunday, he noticed the special car of the president of the road, which the limited train had put in on the side track. There were orders from the dispatcher for Bob to bring to headquarters the president's car. As Bob went over to the hotel to get his supper, the general manager, who was the superintendent when Bob entered the service, called for him to come into the car and dine with him.

The daughter of the general manager was also in the car. Bob was a little timid at first about going into the car to dine with the officials.

They had heard of him often, knew of the good work he was doing and, as he was introduced to the president of the road, he arose and extended his hand, giving Bob a warm welcome, saying, he was pleased that his company had so faithful a man in its service.

"I have also received a letter from the Governor of the State thanking our company for the great improvement made in the condition of the convicts we have hired from the State and who have been on your train. It pays a man, Mr. Royalton, to

be not only a man, but a gentleman. I have been kept posted as to just what you have been doing since you came to work for us and I am pleased to tell you that not one act of yours was unbecoming to a gentleman."

"Mr. President," said Bob, "while I am yet a young man, I know right from wrong, and when I am most happy is when I know I have done right, and have done my duty to my employer in giving service."

The meal was finished in the president's car, when Bob proceeded to the telegraph office and received his running orders, to meet and pass the fast limited at Dixon. When they pulled into the siding at Dixon, it was ten minutes before the time of the limited, when the general manager's daughter expressed a desire to go forward to the engine. Her father said: "Bob will take care of you, but don't fall in love with him."

She said: "I don't know; perhaps I can't help it." The porter of the car came over and told Bob the manager's daughter would like to take a ride on the engine.

Bob had on a clean suit of overalls. He was one of the men that kept his clothes clean and the engine must be the same. In the pocket of his jacket there was a clean piece of white waste. Bob stepped into the gangway, taking the waste out of his pocket. He wiped the dust from the handles of the tank. Then he informed the young lady she could ride with him and he would let her run the engine and blow the whistle for the crossings. To

do this she would have to occupy Bob's seat.

The Limited train came and went. When the special pulled out, the manager's daughter was delighted at seeing so many new and novel features. She watched the headlight throwing a blaze of light far ahead of the engine, glistening like silver as it crept in advance over the polished steel. Bob stood on the foot board, with his hand on the throttle, the other resting upon the reverse lever. The moon came up and was casting its rays of light through the tall pine trees.

Bob was all attention to the engine, and the track ahead, as there were precious lives on board and they were in his care.

As he stood there the small gauge lamp cast a stream of light over his head and shoulders. He was now on duty. As they flew past the telegraph poles, over bridges and through the valleys, there was something about the young lady at his side that was charming, but when compared with Miss Raymond, his heart beat quick and fast, for thoughts came to him of the past.

Bob was master of his engine, and had no fear when speeding along. His trained ear could detect any unusual sound in the working of its machinery. He felt as much at ease when running as when eating his meal in the president's car. This is very essential in the makeup of a locomotive engineer, if he expects to be successful.

He must know that in his pocket he has a time keeper that will give him the exact time. He must have ability to judge the speed that is made in a

given time, for in this is the secret of making correct meeting points and keeping out of trouble.

It is an unusual thing for a locomotive engineer to have one riding upon his engine that would attract any of his attention from the workings of his engine or from his orders to meet and pass trains. As Miss Ward sat on Bob's seat she appeared to be entranced with delight. She had not thought that riding on a locomotive was so exciting. On through the darkness they flew like a giant swallow.

Bob had orders to meet the fast freight at Wilsey, going south, and as his engine rounded a curve the headlight from the freight engine threw its light gleamingly over the polished steel and it appeared directly in front of them.

One not accustomed to riding on an engine, especially in the night, would suppose that the next moment the iron monsters would be together. As they rounded the curve, Bob told Miss Ward not to get frightened if she saw just what he expected she would, the headlight of the other train.

"Don't be afraid, I will not allow any harm to come to you, Miss Ward. This is the train we are to meet and pass."

At this Bob whistled for the station, and a white lantern was seen to move in a circle at the switch, which meant, all clear, come ahead. As they pulled up to the station and stopped, Bob helped Miss Ward down to the platform, when she thanked him for the ride in the cab, and said: "Mr. Royalton, I have read descriptions of riding on a locomotive but will say to get the thrill as it really is, one *must*

ride on the engine. This experience has been worth a great deal to me. It is one of the kind I shall not soon forget."

Bob Royalton had now been with the Texas Road one year. The climate was against him, taking the vim and snap out of his eyes and he tipped the scales at twenty-five pounds less than he did when he went. He was taken ill through the hot weather with a fever, and was advised by a physician to return North with all haste. He informed Mr. Johnson of his condition and that it would be necessary for him to go, at least, for a time.

The next morning he called to say farewell to Mr. Johnson, who was sorry to lose his services, as he had done such good work for the company and they appreciated it. Mr. Johnson handed him a sealed envelope, telling him to put it in his pocket, as it might do him good some time.

With transportation, Bob boarded the train for the North, and, as he left, he felt that while his adventures had brought him some financial gain, they had nearly ruined his health. While sitting in the car, he thought of the envelope Mr. Johnson had given him, and taking it out of his pocket, he opened it and read as follows:

> "Palestine, Texas. This is to certify that the bearer, Bob Royalton, has been in the service of this company for the past year, as locomotive engineer and has had full charge of the convict train. He leaves the service of this company on account of his health. Mr. Royalton is in every way competent to fill the position, as his faithful services have

demonstrated, and he is in every respect a gentleman.

"R. H. JOHNSON, Supt. Motive Power."

After reading that letter he thought it paid to be a man. To receive a letter of recommendation such as that was worth all the work he had done for the company, and he carefully folded it, putting it in his pocket. It proved to Bob that if a young man has enterprise and is willing to work, he will not only succeed, but will have the praise of his employer.

Success does not come by luck and the young man who watches for luck will never reach the height of his desire or obtain distinction. These are the conditions that are keeping thousands of our young men back. Wake up, young man, and make a place for yourself! Let others see your light, and after you have got started, they will be ready to help you supply the oil to keep it burning.

Bob stopped off at Topeka, Kansas. He was too ill to go further, and left the train, as he intended to rest a few days at a hotel. On his way up town, he noticed a card in a window, "Furnished rooms to rent."

It was a neat looking private dwelling with a porch in front, covered with vines. This looked very tempting to him, so tired and weak. Ringing the bell at the front door, it was opened by a middle aged lady, of whom Bob inquired if there was a vacant room.

Entering he soon saw that everything was neat and clean. He rented the room for a week, when

he expected he would feel strong enough to proceed on his journey north.

He explained to Mrs. Smith, the lady, that he had been in the South and believed that he had contracted that fever which usually gives a man not accustomed to the climate a hard fight. Mrs. Smith was a good, kind woman and told Bob that if she could do anything for him, she would do so willingly. She had been unfortunate in marriage, as her husband was a shiftless man, who used up all the money he could get for drink.

Bob was taken sick during the night, and when Mrs. Smith entered his room the next morning, she found him with a burning, high fever.

She had a physician called, but his treatment did not improve him. He grew worse, and for two long weeks he did not know or realize where he was, or that he was so ill. At the end of that time he began to realize that he was very sick. His physician informed him that he had better notify his people for the chances for improvement were not favorable.

Before Bob went South he joined the Royal Arcanum, for the insurance for his mother, and its social Brotherhood features of virtue, mercy and charity. He was now very ill, and a stranger in a strange city. He sent for the Regent of the lodge, who came to Bob's room and extended a hand of welcome and good cheer, with fellowship sincere.

Bob gave this brother the letter which Mr. Johnson gave to him. A new physician was called and a brother of the order came down to sit with him. This gave Bob his first real experience in a realiza-

tion of what the Brotherhood of Man really meant. To be very ill in a strange city, to have a stranger come to him and extend his hand, his heart and loving sympathy was indeed worth while.

The Regent of the lodge read Bob's letter of recommendation from Mr. Johnson before the members that night and it happened that Mr. Hackney, Superintendent of Motive Power, was in need of good engineers, and, hearing a recommendation from a man like that, he wanted him to work for his company.

The next day, he visited Bob, and told him to call upon him as soon as he was well enough. Bob's new physician soon had him out, as the fever had had its run, but left him greatly reduced in weight. In about two weeks Bob called upon Mr. Hackney for a position. He was assigned to one of the big ten wheel engines, between Topeka and Kansas City. He could run the engine, and, with the help of his fireman, he managed to work on this division for a month.

By this time he had regained some strength and was able to make his regular trips. He came into Topeka about 6 P.M. from Kansas City, with a heavy train of iron for the California extension. As he backed his engine over the roundhouse pit, the foreman came up to him, informing him that Mr. Hackney wished to see him at his office, in the machine shop.

"Don't stop to wash or change your clothes, Bob; just go over as you are, as he is waiting for you."

This company had ordered a number of new en-

gines. Bob had hauled the first consignment of two engines in his train three days previous. An engineer's heart is always stirred by anything that looks new and good, and when Bob had stepped up into the cab of the 403, after having side-tracked his train for the limited, he thought, how new and trim she looked, a standard engine, new and bright. As the whistle of the engine on the Limited sounded, Bob stepped from the cab of 403, envying the man who would command the throttle on so fine and well built locomotive.

He called at the superintendent's office and found him waiting for him.

"Good evening," said Bob, "I was told that you wished to see me."

"Yes, I want you to come with me out into the shop."

As they went out into the big machine shop, all the many wheels and belts were stilled, as the workmen had gone home. Plainly could be heard the sound of a Westinghouse air pump, compressing air, in the farther end of the shop. As they drew near, Bob saw a couple of machinists with torches working about the pit over which stood engine 403. How her numbers shone out in gold leaf on her tank and cab! Bob's heart felt light. His imagination was carrying him over the polished highway. She was a beauty and compared to none but the 66 on the Lake Shore Road.

"My boy," said the superintendent, "here is one of our new engines. I wish you to take her out in the yard and give her a good run up and down the

main track. The despatcher will let you go a couple of miles west as soon as the trains will allow.

"After you are satisfied, she will run as first section of No. 1. I want you to select your fireman and take her to New Mexico, one thousand miles west. There are two long steel rails firmly fastened together between here and San Marcial. There is a mile post, one mile from each station with the name of the station printed thereon. Can you run her out there, not being acquainted with the road?"

At this Bob looked at the superintendent and said: "I see nothing to prevent me from at least making the undertaking."

"I thought so," said the official. "And as we are short of an engineer on the western end of our road I chose you to take this engine out there and I will assign you to engine 403. You have the keys. Give them to no man without orders from me to do so."

"I greatly appreciate the confidence you have placed in me," said Bob, "I can assure you that Bob Royalton will not allow the new wheels on 403 to touch ground through any carelessness of his."

"I believe that, Sir," said the official. "I therefore leave you in charge of this engine, and wish you a safe journey to New Mexico."

Bob telephoned down to the round house to have his fireman, Andy Mills, come up to the shop. Andy was one of those young men who are as square as a meeting house, and loved Bob as a brother. As Andy came up, Bob was twisting a ball of candle wicking for the new torch, as he had a particular

job on his hands, one where a great deal of care must be exercised.

After the tools were all placed on the engine, oil cups filled, brakes tested, Bob moved the iron beauty out on the main track for a first limber up.

She had been carefully assembled by skilled machinists and Bob found her in fine trim, with the exception of all the bearings warming up, which was to be expected on a new engine.

At one o'clock P.M. the second afternoon the 403 was standing on the main track headed westward and Bob was in the dispatcher's office after his running orders, which read as follows:

"Engineer Royalton, Engine 403, will run to Emporia as first section of number 1, and carry red flags for second section."

No. One was the regular overland flyer, and being second section was supposed to enter and depart from all stations five minutes behind the scheduled time. As Bob, Andy, his fireman, and the flagman started the 403 westward that afternoon the new, bright, clean red flags were flying in the breeze from the brass flag staffs on the pilot beams. He had recovered his health, and to be the engineer of a new engine, to be the first one that ever ran her, justly made him proud.

When he left the south a short time previously he looked forward to his arrival at the old home. There he had an attraction, some one he loved, some one that had his heart in keeping. Uncle Sam had often brought him the good news that the keeper of his heart was still true.

The leather pouch, if it could but speak, might tell of kisses it had delivered, dreams of love, hope and happiness, all for the expectant future.

Bob's work was more skilled than when he was a painter or a farmer, and while it did not take as much nerve to drive the iron horse as it did the span of mules crossing the plains when he was a boy, he had at his command more force and power than he did when he held the lines over the mules. He had there at his command the greatest force in power known to man. The engineer's first duty is to know water from steam, and this is as simple to the trained ear of the engineer as it is for a person to put his finger into water and know whether it is hot or cold.

To run his engine and pull the train,—do it without waste of oil or fuel,—he must know the road bed, the ups and downs, and the safety of the train depended wholly upon his judgment. He is expected to keep his train on time to the minute and is expected to do this on a dark and stormy night, as well as in the day time.

If he was to stop his train every time he saw someone cross the track, or a cow standing near, he would not make a success, but always be late.

To a young runner, who is timid at first on a fast train, confidence comes gradually. He sees that he is able to make all connections with other roads and keep his train on time. As he grows older in experience, he becomes accustomed to his duties, and is as much at home riding on his trusty iron horse, as the man who sits in his parlor at home.

One might suppose that with all these levers, gauges, valves, and his orders from the dispatchers, in meeting and passing trains, Bob would be afraid of getting into trouble. Not so. He had confidence in his ability to do every part of his duty, and do it at just the right time, and in the right way.

A successful engineer is born, and practice cultivates his knowledge and judgment. It would be extravagant to assert that accidents will not occur. They come to the best and oldest runners in the service. Unless nature designs one to be a successful engineer, a lifetime devoted to training would not make him a good one.

Many times do they leave a station in a blinding snow storm, heavy fog, a terrible rain storm. You may say that it takes years to acquire experience that will fit one for the responsibility of hundreds of precious lives, who are disrobed and snugly tucked away in a sleeping car, slumbering soundly with no fear for their safety.

These same people ride so often they have learned to have confidence in that man ahead, who sits on his little seat in the cab, watching for what? The unexpected. He cannot be certain as to the safety of the track. He is forced to depend upon the fidelity of the section men who keep the track in repair and the man who closed the switch last, and how well he did it can't be told until the switch is past.

Only a step lies between them and death, and that is the step of one traveling fifty or sixty miles an hour. We pick up the daily papers and read

that some unfortunate hero was caught at the post of duty with the throttle in his hand, straining every nerve to stop his train, but could not, and was counted among the dead.

Passengers often grumble about delays, as they seem to them, but the engineer knows better. He never yields to what would be an unreasonable demand, when his better judgment points in a different direction. He is able to do the thing required of him in case of emergency, in an instant, a second's delay might be disastrous to hundreds of passengers.

Here he sits commanding the monstrous weight of iron. In the darkness of black midnight, the headlight, shaking and quivering in its frame, throws its bright light up the track, notifying night travelers of the danger following it.

He hears the click of the furnace door, as it is swung to and fro by his mate, the sound of the machinery and clicking wheels, as they pass from rail to rail. His heart grows hardened to the ups and downs which he sees from the cab.

They are wonderful to the inexperienced, but to him simple and easy. He may look strong and brave, but I dare say there are but few men among the many thousands that are now piloting these iron horses but that on a dark, stormy night often breathe a silent prayer to heaven for the safety of their train and the precious lives of those on board.

Danger is a foe, lurking for victims, that does not travel with a banner and a drum. It calls for something more than muscle to overcome an enemy, in

the dead hour of midnight, an enemy who, with a silent step, waits to send you to eternity. He is a true hero, staunch and brave, who will ride his engine and defy danger and the grave. He may not wear a hero's crown, or a diamond in his shirt. His face may be stained with dust and oil, but in his heart he knows no words but duty and service.

THERE IS NO PICTURE THAT COMPARES WITH THE PICTURE OF A FAST MOVING TRAIN, LOADED WITH HUMAN LIVES.

The great strain on engine men today on fast moving trains is to watch from the cab, motorists who try to beat the train over the grade crossing where a second's miscalculation means death to the occupants of the car.

Railroads are endeavoring to do everything possible to lessen needless sorrow resulting from careless auto drivers, who have no conception of speed or judgment in approaching a railroad crossing.

We request the reader to imagine this picture from the cab of an engine, on a fast train at a speed of sixty miles an hour, with the oncoming automobile, being driven by one who is endeavoring to make the crossing first. He disregards the appealing whistle on the engine, and drives on the track with his helpless ones in the car to instant death.

The National Government should hasten to pass a law compelling obedience by those who have been given a license by the State, requiring all motorists to come to a full stop, and look and listen before proceeding over the railroad track.

The speed-crazed driver who is not responsible, should have never been given a license by the State to deliberately kill his own family. This is the sentiment of every fast train engineer.

The author states these facts, which is a digression from Bob's story, but which prove that the wholesale deaths at railroad crossings recorded daily, rest entirely in the hands of those who disregard the joy of living.

CHAPTER IX

OB ROYALTON the past year had held a very responsible position with the Texas Railroad, pulling the convict train working with men who cared nothing for their honor, society or the laws of the State. It left an impression that should challenge every young man to reflect upon what the outcome will be when the laws and the love of life are disregarded.

It is the pride and ambition of all engine men to be assigned to a new engine, to be the first to run it. Bob was no exception in this desire and was much pleased as he guided the new Iron Beauty over this road that was entirely new to him. Eight years had now passed since he, a mere boy, drove a pair of mules hitched to his Covered Wagon going eastward. He was now driving the Iron Horse with its great power of steam and steel, going back over the wild prairie, riding over two lines of polished steel that connected the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.

Many things had come into his life that were different, for in the last eight years he had learned one of the highest class of trades, that carries with it greatest responsibility and had climbed to the very top in this mechanical profession.

He had slipped only once, losing his head and his heart to the dearest woman, who was to share with him in the cultivation of a little flower garden, that was to be their very own.

He rode along over miles and miles of vast prairie, setting the jack rabbits and coyotes scuttling for their holes when the 403 came in sight. Covering a long run, Bob and Andy, his fireman, rode their new engine to Trinidad, Colorado. Here he was to rest until the next morning, and have the water changed in the boiler of 403, and some other necessary work done.

This town was located at the foot of the Great Rocky Mountains. Before train No. 1 left for the ascent, Bob and Andy watched the preparation of the train before it started. There was the regular passenger engine coupled on ahead, then the largest engine used on the mountain, called "Uncle Dick," the safety engine coupled in the rear of the train.

Bob watched these three iron monsters of steel leave the station with seven coaches for the ascent. Up, up, they went, winding around sharp curves, over iron bridges and into the great tunnel.

As Bob and Andy went over to the depot about six o'clock P.M. there was a big crowd to be seen on the platform. The pay car had just pulled in, with its engine disabled. The workmen of the road were there to draw their pay. The paymaster was a well built man with deep set eyes, with a nerve of steel, was quick to act, and on his face was no trace of fear.

The trip through Mexico over the Rocky Moun-

tains with the pay car was one that took nerve those days, as on nearly every trip each month some plan was laid by desperadoes to get their hands on the thousands of dollars of the company's money that Jim Moore, the paymaster, carried in the car.

As Bob was sitting in the hotel office after eating his supper, the call boy came and handed him a note from the paymaster to come down to the pay car. The paymaster had been notified by the superintendent that as the regular pay car engine was disabled, 403, Engineer Royalton, would pull his car on its Western trip. The paymaster was responsible to the company for the amount of money in the car.

He did not intend to allow any of it to get away from him by foul means if possible to prevent it. When he was notified by the superintendent that he was to have another engine and engineer, he wished to make sure the engineer was all right, as on this western trip he depended on the engineer, who slept with him in the car to guard the thousands of dollars in gold that belonged to the company. The paymaster wired back to Topeka to the master mechanic to make sure that Engineer Royalton was all right.

This official had left his office in the big shop and was at his home, when the telephone rang. He stepped up to the phone, taking down the receiver and heard: "Hello, is this the superintendent of motive power?"

"Yes," was the answer.

"This is Black, the train dispatcher. I have just

received a message for you from the paymaster, now at Trinidad, as follows: "Pay car engine disabled, will continue west from here with engine 403. Can I depend upon Bob Royalton, the engineer?"

"Well, now, Black, I will tell you," said the official. "This engineer Royalton is a new man, and so far, he has proven himself perfectly competent. He had one of the best recommendations that a man could possibly have, and I feel perfectly safe in wiring the paymaster that he can rely on that chap for every cent he has in the car."

"That was my impression," said Black, "I examined him on the time card when he commenced, and found him one of the best posted men I ever examined. I feel confident that he will run the car and keep clear of all trains, as well as give protection."

So Black wrote the following message and telephoned it over to the official for his approval:

"Place full confidence in Bob Royalton; he is all right. Superintendent Motive Power."

"And is fully competent on time card.

"J. Black, Train Dispatcher."

The paymaster had received this message of assurance from the official before he sent the note to Bob to come down to the pay car. As Bob stepped up to the entrance of the car, the colored porter unlocked the door for Bob to enter. He did so and introduced himself to the paymaster.

"I believe you sent for me," said Bob.

"Yes," said the man who paid out the gold

to the employees. "You have been assigned with engine 403 to pull the car westward. I wanted to see you and tell you what I must expect of you."

As the paymaster looked at Bob standing before him, he decided that he was to be trusted and was just the fellow to depend upon in case of trouble, which was looked for at any moment.

"Mr. Royalton," said the paymaster, "I must place full confidence in you. In this western country there are to be found the roughest characters of men, men who would shoot us down to get at the contents of this car. You and I are to watch every move, every act of any suspicious character around the car. From our men, of course, we have no fear, but there are always some rough fellows looking for gold and they would pull their guns on me, while I am paying off the men.

"This belt you can put around your waist and in it is a gun that has so far never missed fire. At night your fireman and the flagman are to sleep in the forward end of the car with a gun at their sides, ready in case we want assistance. The watchman from the regular engine that is disabled will accompany us, and he is supposed to give the alarm at night by pulling a rope in the cab that is attached to this bell over our heads in the car. The porter will always be up at night, while we are asleep. I feel that I can rely on you," said the paymaster, handing Bob the message from the master mechanic. As Bob read it, he felt the responsibility that was placed on him and said, "I will do my duty."

The next morning about seven A.M. Bob started up the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains, with his new engine 403, the flagman standing at his side on the foot board to pilot him over the mountain. As they left he said to Bob, "Get a move on her, as there is a hill up there just this side of the tunnel, and you will have all you want to get over."

Bob had confidence enough in his new engine to climb a track perpendicularly, but after he had reached nearly the top and the 403 was working full capacity, he made up his mind that climbing the Rockies was more difficult than he had supposed.

At the further end of the division the company had been doing a great deal of new construction work and therefore had a large force of men at work and all were looking for the pay car. To meet their demands Jim, the paymaster, had received a large amount of money by express, all of which was stored away in the big safe of the pay car.

Let us go back a little. After Bob had eaten his supper the night before, he stepped into the lobby of the hotel to get a cigar. After lighting it he walked to the back of the room to watch some squirrels that were whirling in a wire cage. As he stood viewing the confined little creatures, he heard some voices in a small room with a half partition and saw the bar tender entering with some well filled glasses. After the bartender returned to the bar, Bob heard one of the fellows who was evidently the leader of the gang, say:

"Now let us see if we all understand each other. There will be a new man on in front who does not

know anything about the lay of the road. Extra stamps are sure to come on the Overland, and he is sure to follow shortly after they leave. When the Overland passes over the iron bridge through the gulch, Ben is to run and start a fire with them old bridge timbers, under the new iron bridge. Of course the bridge is so high that the ties on top will be all right. It is smoke we want and lots of it.

"Then Tom is to be up on the path and signal them to stop. They will see the smoke and, of course, think just what we want them to, and if we five can't put daylight through that load of hay, we ought to die and go with our boots on. There is a big pile inside, and, fellows, it is our only chance to do business. They will be game on the start, but it is big game we are after."

As the bartender was called to fill the glasses again, Bob walked into the hotel office and was here found sitting in one of the chairs, when the call boy came to him with the note.

He noticed that every person about the place had a gun in his belt and concluded that there were a good many desperate men in that part of the country.

As this conversation came to him before he knew he was to have charge of the pay car, he did not at the time understand that this plot was laid to do him up and rob the pay car.

What followed in the evening occupied his mind and he did not think of the plan he had overheard. As Bob left the hotel, he saw five Mexican horses tied outside in front of the bar room. He pro-

ceeded to the pay car and the five riders came out well filled with red-eye and untied their horses, and, mounting, started out of the town. One of them, who was a tall, raw boned man with shaggy looking, unkempt whiskers, with long hair and wide-brimmed hat on his head, attracted Bob's attention more than any of the five. He was a specimen of human being that one would not soon forget.

Let us go back to the train again. Bob now passed through the tunnel and of course was unaware what was waiting for him in the gulch below. He had orders to pass over the mountain regardless of all trains, and when the 403 poked her head through the tunnel, the descent had begun. Down, down, like the roof of a house, ran the track around sharp curves and over iron bridges.

Bob could command his engine and car, as the 403 was well equipped with brakes and he felt no fear for the safety of the car behind. He now saw some smoke rolling up out of the gulch, and, as they drifted around another curve, a man could be seen waving a signal to stop.

Bob's quick eye, always on the watch for just such things, saw the man at once as he stood signalling danger.

The flagman said, "Stop, the bridge is no doubt on fire."

"Just keep cool," said Bob. "Don't either one of you jump."

The 403 was now near enough to the fellow who was waving the danger signal for Bob to see it was the man with the long hair. Their plan, he had

overheard. All came to him like a flash. There was the smoke ahead, under the bridge was the fire, and the pay car was the load of hay with plenty inside.

Did Bob stop to investigate? Not then, for the 403 appeared to roll down through the canyon and over that iron bridge, through the smoke up on the other side.

"Well, Mr. Engineer," said the man who was to pilot him, "I guess you don't need anyone to tell you what to do. I believe those fellows had laid that plan to rob the pay car. Did you see those four men at the bridge, look as we passed by them?"

"I was on to their game just in time," said Bob, as he proceeded over the division.

That night as Bob and the paymaster sat smoking in the pay car at Wallace, Jim said:

"Well, Bob, you managed to get over the mountain all right."

"I did," said Bob, "but it was through one of those circumstances that enter into a man's life at just the right time, that save him and others perhaps entrusted in his care."

"What do you refer to?" asked Jim, pulling his chair closer to Bob, and with all attention, waiting for the answer.

Bob related the conversation he had overheard and his understanding of it. The paymaster was much interested and fully realized that his new engineer had saved the Company at least fifty thousand dollars, and perhaps, some lives. From that time on, Bob Royalton and James Moore, the re-

liable and accomplished paymaster, were warm friends.

Bob was now at San Marchial, New Mexico, and was to run his engine from there on the western division to El Paso and Demming. This division was one hundred and fifty miles long, and it crossed the desert, where no water was to be had at that time.

Each engine pulled next to the tender a water car to supply the engine with water.

San Marchial proper was an old Mexican town built of adobe houses. It was located on the Rio Grande River. Across the river is a very high bluff. There the United States troops ended the war with Mexico, and from this high bluff gave them the lead that caused a white flag of truce to appear in the old town, San Marchial.

At this time, in New Mexico, the train robbers were bold dare-devils, who never hesitated to take a human life, when they thought it necessary to accomplish their end. This company at this time hauled from the west express cars, loaded with silver bullion, consigned to the United States Mint at Philadelphia. The week previous to this intended hold up, the Southern Pacific fast eastern train was held up by robbers near Demming, New Mexico. The engineer was shot down in his cab, the express car dynamited and the robbers departed with all the silver bullion they could carry.

The following day the United States troops went after the robbers, captured the most of the bullion, killed only one of the gang who scattered to the

mountains. One week after this hold up, the Southern Pacific came into Demming, and the eastern passengers changed to the Eastern fast train.

A car of bullion had been switched on ahead, and when Bob backed up the 403, the conductor Harry Beebe came up, compared time with Bob and called out the familiar call "Allaboard."

All of the train crews had been provided with sure fire six shooters which they carried in a belt around their waists. Bob and Andy had the guns in their belts. On pulling out into the darkness, a man caught hold of the handle on the tank, swinging himself up in the gangway, stated that he was a United States Detective, and he had pinned on his coat a star to give confidence to Bob that he was all right. He stated that at the last moment they had learned that a hold up was to take place about ten miles out, that he had his men back in the train to make a capture of the robbers.

Bob took the man by surprise when he pulled his gun on him, and at the same time Andy drew his gun, "Not a move or I will put you to sleep; back out of this cab, you robber, back out and jump, or I will put some lead clear through you." The man jumped off in the darkness, as he well knew that Bob would have done as he said.

The train was now gaining speed, as Bob and Andy with their guns on this desperado; he jumped off in the darkness and rolled down the bank, and when found the next day, he was a dead robber.

Bob was all aglow in anticipation of the holdup.

Andy put in a fire and as he looked up they both saw a red light swinging across the track.

"Ah," said Bob. "We were on to their game just in time." A red lantern down the track swung back and forth in the hazy mist for the train to stop in the trap that was all planned by the desperate robbers. Bob's train was gaining speed, and as they went past where the gang of robbers was waiting shots were fired by the desperadoes.

Bob had great admiration for Andy, his fireman; it is the fireman who performs the hard manual labor in train service. It is by the swinging of the scoop that the life and power of the engine is maintained, thus there is close coöperation and friendship between the engine driver and the fireman who supplies the driving power, and who when promoted becomes the engineer of tomorrow.

Reader, stop for one moment and glance at the following carefully. We wish to draw the curtain before you as you sit at your fireside, perhaps this cold winter's night, we want you to look with open eyes, and, in your imagination construct this picture.

Your sister or brother, or it may be, your father, who accompanied your mother to the depot is far away from you now. You have before you on the stand a letter, telling you that your mother was to leave tonight to visit you. You have expected her for a long time, the spare room has been all recleaned, the bed has snow white woolen blankets thick and warm, for mother when she arrives.

You are expecting mother tonight. She is to leave her old home, perhaps where you were born,

and undertake this long journey to be with you. She wrote you that the train she would take to come to you left at eight o'clock at night. You find, as you look at the clock sitting on the mantle before you, that it is now ten minutes before the train is due for her departure. You can see her in your imagination as she enters the depot to purchase the ticket and have that trunk checked, which contains something for you, something for the children, for she knows that a few trinkets brought from the old home would be dear to you.

You see her enter the car. Here your imagination is interrupted by the whistling of the wind, the howling of the storm king. You put a little more fuel on the fire, you go to the window and look out into space, into the night of darkness and storm.

"Oh, if mother had chosen any other night but this. What danger she may be in." You can think of no one but mother, and you pray for her safety.

Don't be worried about mother, dear reader, Bob Royalton is perhaps not pulling the train she is aboard, but there are one hundred thousand as brave and true as Bob Royalton, and one of them is pulling that train tonight with your mother in his care. The storm roars, the blustering, sleeting ice is everywhere covering the track of ties and steel before him. Don't worry about mother, this man is accustomed to duty. From that he never shirks. With his head out of the cab window, in that fearful storm, he rides, as he cannot and will not take anything for granted.

He must know that danger signal swinging ahead is for him, and your mother. He sees it, he never misses one, and when he brings her to you safely through that rough night, the picture in reality dawns before you, and who did it? A man like Bob Royalton.

At this time, three special trains were made up in Boston and New York City, with about one hundred tourists to each train, to make a trip over the States to California. From Kansas City they were routed over this road. As these trains were run two days apart, there was no possible danger of getting into trouble by a train running into the one in advance. The company was very careful whom they placed in charge of these trains, and the general superintendent ordered none but the best conductors and engineers to pull them, men who would take them through safely.

When the first train arrived at the east side of the Rocky Mountains, Bob Royalton received a message from the general superintendent to have his engine in trim to pull these trains over the last two divisions. It was also explained to him in a letter from the superintendent of motive power that the Company had agreed to deliver the trains at El Paso at six o'clock each second morning, to be turned over there to the Southern Pacific Railway and he was expected to do so on schedule time. Every effort was to be made, by giving a clear track, for the trains must make fast speed across the desert.

At Wallace, New Mexico, each train was scheduled to stop for one hour for the tourists to witness

the great night dance of the Indians. He was to leave Wallace at nine P.M., giving Bob nine hours to pull the train to El Paso.

On the first trip, they were rushing through the darkness at two o'clock in the morning. They rounded a curve and ran out on a long embankment, that led to a bridge, where the road crossed a canyon over a long high trestle, one half mile ahead.

There was a drove of wild horses, standing upon the track a short distance ahead. At just such a time and crisis as this, the engineer on a fast train has but a moment to act. Bob knew that trying to stop before reaching the trestle meant destruction to his train. The wild horses were going directly toward the trestle, and his only chance was to overtake them before the trestle was reached as the beautiful animals must be sacrificed. On they flew, like a cannon ball, picking up those horses one by one, and sending them into the air and down the bank. The last three were tossed over the bank into the water below, and on went the train in safety.

Bob's Iron Horse was rolling over the polished steel in the darkness of night at a speed of sixty miles an hour. The precious load of human lives, disrobed and fast asleep, were unconscious of their danger, but with full confidence in Bob Royalton who was guiding the iron horse. It made his heart sad to be compelled to destroy those beautiful wild horses of the plains.

On they rolled picking them up before the bridge was reached, sending them over the bank. The

Bob Royalton, the Boy Engineer with the Boston Special Train, Ran into a Drove of Wild Horses in the Night Making Fast Speed Across the Desert in New Mexico. Bob Ditched the Wild Horses and Saved His Train of Human Lives.

Boston Special Train rolled on in the silent darkness, the headlight throwing a silver stream of light in advance of the fast oncoming train.

As the train cleaved the darkness that was unfolded over the vast desert, the picture of the wild horses going over the bank, was reflected before Bob through the cab window of his faithful iron steed. The horse is Man's good friend, no matter if he was wild and yet untamed.

Those horses roamed the plains and were led by their leader upon the railway track not sensing the danger of the swift oncoming train and were all destroyed. The lives of the horses were sacrificed in order to save the lives of the sleeping tourists who were entrusted in the care of Bob the boy Engineer.

The public can never realize the great responsibility of the men in the cab making fast speed, who are ever watchful of the danger that may come, which requires quick action to save the train.

"Just like you, Bob," said Andy, his fireman. "We are safe, and not a sleeping soul in the train knew how close he came to eternity."

"Such is life, Andy," said Bob, as they rolled on through the darkness. "That is one of the instances that come to only men like you and me, riding at the head of a fast train."

"We foiled the robbers," said Andy, "who thought they were to capture the pay car. We put a leader of the train robbers over the bank. We have just landed a drove of wild horses. It must be your good luck picture of your blue-eyed beauty hanging up there that keeps us from harm."

At Albuquerque, a stop was made. There was no use in a delay before, as all the horses had cleared the track.

When Bob with his lighted torch glanced hastily around the engine, to drop on a little oil, he found the pilot of his noble pet covered with blood. The incident was reported to the officials of the road. The first train arrived at El Paso on time, and at noon the next day, Bob Royalton received a message from the superintendent, that there were ten wild horses lying at the side of the road near the bridge, and complimented him in the highest terms for acting as he did. To the horse-lover this can only mean keen regret.

As Bob pulled into the station with the Boston Special at El Paso, many passengers came out of the train and walked up and down the platform to limber up as it was a long ride from Boston to El Paso, Texas. Bob's engine was uncoupled from the train, backed in on a switch near the depot and in the meantime, the engine of the Southern Pacific was backed up and coupled to the Boston Special Train.

Bob's queen of the road had rolled ten wild horses over the bank and her pilot and running gear were covered with blood. Many of the passengers had learned from the porters about the wild horses and came up to Bob's engine to look her over and size up the boy engineer who had saved the train of human lives.

There was an editor of a Boston paper on the train who came up to Bob and made inquiries about

ditching the wild horses, which he wired to his paper in Boston. The next day there were important headlines in the Boston paper as follows:

THE BOSTON SPECIAL TRAIN RAN INTO A DROVE OF WILD HORSES CROSSING THE DESERT

"Rounding a curve last night making fast speed across the Desert the Boston Special Train ran into a drove of wild horses. Bob Royalton, the young engineer, put the wild horses all over the bank before the long bridge was reached which spans Canyon Guley. His engine, No. 403, was covered with blood. We are all well, having a fine time, and all give praise to this young engineer, Bob Royalton."

It is such encouragements as this from the traveling public and the officials of the road, that make men brave, and stimulate them to be more watchful if possible, for lurking foes while speeding through the darkness of night on fast important trains.

BOB RECEIVES A TELEGRAM

Bob Royalton,
Engine 403.
El Paso, Texas.

I note in the papers that Bob Royalton's engine 403, ran into a drove of wild horses crossing the Desert with a Boston Special Train.

If you are the Bob Royalton who had charge of our convict train last summer, come to Palestine and accept a position as Superintendent on our road. Wire answer. Signed,

James Ward, Gen'l Manager.

BOB'S ANSWER

JAMES WARD, Gen'l Manager,
Palestine, Texas.

Yes, I am Bob Royalton who pulled the convict train. Am going back to the States to be present at Bob's wedding. Thanks. If I decide to accept offer will advise. Signed,

BOB ROYALTON.

CHAPTER X

OME time previous Bob's mother had moved from Scott to White Pigeon, Michigan. Her cottage was painted white; there was a porch in front and one along the side, over which grape vines were running out into the garden where vegetables for her table was raised. There were many flowers, yes flowers everywhere as Bob's mother loved flowers.

She was always very attentive to her flowers, and never hurried their unfolding. While they were young and tender, she shielded them from the frost and cold, and gave them sticks to lean upon, while growing to the blooming time. She would then take her sewing near the window, where she could look out at them anticipating the time when they would unfold their beauty and stand the storms that came.

Like her boy Bob for whom she had cared in childhood, and watched his growth, shared in with him in all of his trials and back pulls, and unfolded to him, what an honest upright life would mean to him.

Now that Bob had grown to be a young man, with qualities firmly established, he would be able with his determination, to overcome all the storms without, just as his mother's flowers had done.

When the train pulled into the station bringing Bob home from the far West, he was warmly greeted by those plain honest people, who had known him from a mere boy. Yes, this was the village and the very station where Bob had boarded a train for the first time in his young life with his carpet bag, headed for the great West.

Walking up the street in beautiful White Pigeon Village, carpeted with green grass and overshadowed by large shade trees, he saw the elevator with its sloping bridge, where when a mere boy, he stopped a pair of frightened horses that were running away, with a young girl holding fast to the lines, her hair waving in the breeze.

Further up the street was the little shop, where he had started in the manufacturing business, with the lumber from one walnut log; not far away was the barn which he had painted two coats in one day and made a profit of forty cents. Here was the four corners, and near by the town pump that furnished the water to make the lemonade which he sold at his stand and made a profit of $22.22.

There are no hearts truer or love more sincere than that which comes from home people in the villages of the land, for they extend both hands to the boy upon his return whom they knew from childhood.

As Bob passed on up the street he saw a cottage painted white with vines over the porch and flowers in the well kept yard. A lady was out in the yard bending over a rose bush with a pair of shears in her hand. Walking up to the gate, Bob said, "I

love flowers, mother, but I love you more." There is no pleasure, no joy and happiness so complete as the meeting of one's mother after a long absence.

The world might have said that Bob was a very young man to achieve so responsible a position as that of driving the Iron Horse on fast trains loaded with human lives.

After all, years have very little to do with a young man who has the determination in him to win his own reward, to achieve that for which he has planned and striven from youth.

Disappointments, discouragements, defeats, and a slow resignation to fate are some of the steps into the dark which the unprepared young man must take, while he is striving for the beauties that come from a worthy life.

Bob was determined to win and win he did, although he was three years under age when he made the attempt. If one goes forward with a light heart, a smile and puts forth a strong determination, obstacles will vanish for they frighten only the coward.

Bob had now grown up to be a young man, just as every boy will; he had now set his heart on the biggest thing he had ever undertaken. Would he fail? Bob was somewhat timid, but he knew that he was entitled to the very thing that usually comes into the lives of all young men. The love in his heart was pushing him on, and where love directs there can be no failure.

As we draw to a close in this homey every day story, we state that Bob Royalton was one of Uncle Sam's Boys. A young man who fought his own

battles on and up and could stand before the world without one stain side by side of the American girl and salute Old Glory.

As Bob looked back at the narrow escapes, and the things from which he had builded his character, taking stock of his adventures, he found that courage alone was the mainspring of his achievements. A clean life was the pledge made with all boys at the commencement of this story. To do good and to be honored brings with it the fulfillment of all aspirations and desires that come into a young man's life.

Bob felt that he should tell his mother about his love affair, for she must know this and he was sure that he would receive her consent and motherly blessing.

"Well, Robert, I am not surprised. From a little boy, you have always had a big heart, sharing with others, and if you have chosen to share your life with another I know you will be happy.

"Counsel with her in all things, for as she comes into your life there must be love and happiness. If neglected, her ambition and hope will become like the wilted and faded rose. Always see that she comes first, and not last, and that your love streams are pure.

"Don't be unkind and untrue and grouch around with a sour disposition because your impulses and desires are not satisfied. Remember that her love is the very foundation of the home, upon which you and your children will grow and thrive.

"Don't rave around over imaginary ills to make

yourself and those you come in contact with unhappy. Don't be selfish and serve yourself first; have great consideration for others and open wide the windows in your heart, which will enable you to laugh and play with little children and share in their childish joys and never forget to be considerate of old age.

"Every young man that knows his own heart and strives to do his part, makes no mistake when he plans for a wife. It is God's will, the law of nature, my boy, which both must strive to fulfill in order to receive from life that which pays dividends in true happiness."

Before Bob reached home, he spent a couple of days at No. Manchester. As was quite natural, the home town young men were indeed envious to have a stranger from the far West come to their town and take away one whom they grew up with and greatly admired.

As the preparations were being made for the wedding, we find Bob at his mother's home. The second day after his arrival home, he went over to the small Village of Scott. Bob was craving to see all of his old friends; to have one more look at the old Covered Wagon that had carried him across the plains when he was a boy.

As Bob entered the Village, they all greeted him as of old. There was the old mill, in which he nearly lost his life. The willow trees around the old mill had grown to be mammoth trees with long shaggy branches, waving a welcome to him.

What is there more admirable in life, than to

see young men return after a long absence to their old boyhood home, to be welcomed by all of their former associates without one stain upon their characters?

When Bob sold his mules the old Covered Wagon was left on the back end of the lot on the bank of the race, at his mother's cottage home in the Village of Scott. It is to be recalled that Bob assembled this old wagon from discarded parts at the blacksmith shop at Beatrice, on the bank of the Big Blue River.

There were three wheels of one size and one larger one, this was the reason for Bob's Covered Wagon attracting so much attention as it rambled over the highway. Bob was very anxious on his return after his long absence to see if any part of the old wagon still remained. Going down to the back end of the lot, on the bank of the race in the weeds and brush, one of the wheels was in sight.

Making a survey of what was left, he discovered the larger wheel, which was the best of the four, still on the axle and a robin had made its nest between the spokes in the decayed hub, perhaps to guard it until his return. Three of the wheels, the box and other parts were fallen from the long exposure.

Going over to the mill, Bob secured assistance and very gently did they lift the dear old wagon out of the brush into the sunlight to have its picture taken, to show our readers the remains of Bob's old Covered Wagon that carried him across the plains.

The Relic of Bob's Covered Wagon.

Bob sat down near the dear old relic to meditate upon the past. As he surveyed, he saw the wire he had wound around the felloe to keep the tire in place, until he could complete his remarkable overland trip back to his boyhood home.

Could it be possible that when he was a small boy this old wagon carried him across the plains, sleeping under the blue sky alone in the darkness of night?

This was the dear old fortress that protected him in the night when the savage wolves came and ate the grease from the spokes, when he was compelled to fire the prairie to save his life. Yes, and this was the same old wagon that was carried in the air by a cyclone that dumped him out in the night while the powers of the air held high carnival that long night.

Was it all planned by some unseen power as a test for him? Perhaps so. It proved at least that every boy and young man, who is determined and will use his God-given will power, with the love and teaching of his mother to back him, can face the cold world alone and will win in his efforts for success.

Before this fountain pen runs dry, we wish to add a word of cheer to those boys and young men who will read this story of Bob Royalton and his Covered Wagon. There will come into your lives when starting out for success, darkened hours of gloom, in which it may seem to you that no rays of the sunshine can penetrate. Hold on to the lines tighter; the vision of hope will come to give you

courage to overcome all difficulties, if you will keep on going.

It's the human experience that counts, and every experience should be strengthened by the one before it; strengthen the will power giving the vision of what can be done, and what you can make of yourself. Nothing makes a young man so happy as to realize that all of his faculties are being trained and used to the limit.

Some arrest their own development without realizing it by unconsciously leaning on the brakes when a little more pep will allow their train to reach its destination on time, carrying smile signals for others.

Some who have failed, are honored by friend and foe, as he who begins a task, though he may fail, to complete it, is ranked side by side with those who finish it, because it was he that blazed a new trail that others did not dare to attempt.

Bob strolled up the race bank to the old swimming hole, sat down on a log to meditate over the past, when he a boy with others boys sat on this same old log.

There was the old sycamore tree, with its smooth bark and green branches hanging out over the dear old swimming hole, that brought joy to the hearts of all the boys in the community at that time. The hot rays of the morning sun in the eastern sky, was casting its gleams through the branches of the old sycamore as it did in years past, when he and other boys dove down in the rippling cool waters below.

Bob meditated over his early school days in the

little red school house, and his little girl playmate who often walked with him to school when he was a little boy; how he watched over her during play time, for this is the natural instinct of a real boy. Boys and girls can't always be boys and girls for they will grow up as did Bob and his little playmate.

The next morning Bob was on board the train that pulled into the beautiful city of Wabash, Indiana. He was a little timid this morning as he alighted from the train and walked up to the County Court House, and went into the license office to secure a license for the coming wedding.

An old gentleman with white hair, who was a former judge, adjusted his glasses and scanned the application blank which Bob had filled out and handed to him.

Looking up with a broad smile upon the deeply wrinkled face, he said, "I see your name is Robert Royalton. My boy, you have won a fair prize and have beaten my very own son; I expected this beautiful fair one to occupy that home up there on the hillside and become my daughter.

"You have won the love of one of the brightest and sweetest flowers of this great State. May God bless you and her, and give you many years of true happiness is the sincere wish of one who has known her from childhood.

"Remember, the greatest things that ever come into the life of a young man, come at the time when he stands at the altar with the one he has chosen to be his life mate and they are pronounced man

and wife. Here is where the very foundation of life begins. To have been accepted into her home by the mother, who gave her birth and watched over her from childhood, and who gave her into your care and keeping, brings to you my boy, the greatest gift that can ever come into your life.

"I have been a judge of law and its application for many years, I am now an old man retired from active service and as I recall some of those ceremonies which later made my heart ache as they stood before the court waiting for the decree of a divorce.

"The word divorce is the most dreadful sounding word in the dictionary, and as I have listened to the proceedings, witnessed the sorrow, tears and disappointments, it gave me a sad heart. It is the breaking of the most sacred promise in all human life, the sacred promise given at the altar before God and man, to love and respect each other until death.

"Young people start out on their wedding day, for the future. Many problems come into their young lives which they did not foresee or anticipate with their hearts full of wedded bliss and great hopes on that day; thus both must be considerate of each other's welfare and happiness, as this will give them a determination and steadfastness to surmount all the obstacles of life.

"Never forget that love, affection and true confidence in each other, is like the most beautiful blooming rose which must be carefully tended to bring forth its great beauty and fragrance.

"I trust you will always be worthy of this noble daughter of this great State and cherish her all your life and allow nothing to break your confidence in each other. You must not forget the sacrifice which her mother and her family have made for you.

"Remember that womanhood is the very highest thing in all of God's creation, therefore, cherish and protect her as long as life lasts, and I know that you will have God's blessing."

After Bob secured his license for the marriage, he thanked the honest old gentleman who had talked to him of the experiences he had come in contact with. Bob walked over to the library near by to meditate and collect his thoughts, there was a sacred obligation which he was about to undertake and he promised his own heart that he would always do his part.

It was a wonderful picture in reality that was here presented to Bob by this good man. Men much more readily deceive themselves in affairs of the heart than do women, and sometimes the vision of love, a home and true happiness when translated into the reality becomes as an empty air castle. Because, yes, because what?

Bob was now about to enter upon a new life, with one who was to become his wife, who was to share with him in the cultivation of all the love flowers that would enter their home and hearts for ever and ever.

Who is that young man who has not dreamed of love and happiness in a little cottage with that one dear girl to share? There is such a girl for every

young man who deserves it, who knows in his own heart he is 100%, for that 100% is what gives the young man that victorious attitude to his beating heart and throbbing soul, as he takes her hand before the altar.

That evening Bob and his intended bride, who, of course was much prettier than the artist's picture, sat down on a moss covered log, on the bank of the famous River. The moon was spreading her radiance of silver light over its blue waters.

Oh, what a night for two young lovers, who had been long separated and were true to each other. It was a night that created sentiment and drew hearts closer, on the banks of the Wabash.

The Iron Horse itself with all its thrilling memories ever pictured in their minds, was a silent witness to the exchange of love, when Bob and Phoebe gave their lives and love to each other in its cab.

In the course of human events, there comes into every life an hour that stands out above all others as long as memory lasts, it is the hour in which is recorded the blessing of true love, the uniting of two young hearts.

Bob and Phoebe sitting near the river, with its winding tide, on the night before their wedding day, planned a new life side by side, building air castles; of dreams that were to be, as they entered their new world hand in hand.

"Tomorrow is our wedding day," said Bob. "Tomorrow we start together over the long path of thorns and roses, for tomorrow we are to be bound

Bob and Phoebe
Dreaming on the Banks of the Wabash.

The uniting of two young hearts is the law of life. Bob and Phoebe sat on the bank of this noted river building love aircastles as the moon cast its rays over the evening scene.

in bonds of love, never, no never, to be broken. Yes, tomorrow is the next day after today."

Bob lost his heart to this beautiful young woman as the Iron Horse stood at attention, which gave him courage to unfold his dreams of true love to this queen of womanhood, who was indeed the "Phoebe Snow" of the rail, whose beauty and fame were well known over the great Lackawanna Trail.

Phoebe sat on a green plush cushion in Bob's locomotive cab, dressed in pure white with a red rose pinned over her beating heart and rang the engine bell with her white gloved hand for all to clear the track, for she had given her heart and love to Bob forever.

'Twas a novel place to make love to Phoebe, whose pure love was reflected with every beat of her heart. Bob was bewildered as he stood upon the deck, his hand resting on the throttle to steady him, as he read the love in Phoebe's soft blue eyes.

All of Bob's friends, who have required years and years to grow from boyhood to young manhood, who made a pledge with him in the second chapter, to meet him at the end, when his interesting story was told are invited to be present tomorrow on Bob's wedding day, when he receives his reward.

Bob's climb was hard; some of the hills were steep as he drove over his life's trail. It was manhood nature wanted him to acquire and she never allowed him to lose sight of the fact that it was the drive-on spirit that developed him from boyhood to young manhood worthy of the respect of all his friends and neighbors.

Bob and His Blue-eyed Sweetheart Were Married at High Noon Today.

The steep hills which all must climb with their load of trials and disappointments have wild flowers along the way, God's sunshine and rain, bring them forth with beauty and fragrance for cheer to all who must pull their load up the hill that way.

Bob's story has been told. The author lays down his pen, realizing it is God's love that protects all boys and girls. You saw Bob at the altar about to receive his reward in full payment for all of the hard struggles that came into his young life, at the altar before which your father and mother gave their lives and love to each other for you.

Broadcast it to the world for all young men to be worthy to stand by the side of the American Girl, and with a clean hand and heart, salute the flag of glory, to receive their reward as Bob received his at high noon today.

May their honeymoon boat be anchored by a daisy chain, tied with the white veil of love, that will last forever and ever. We pray the twinkling stars and moonlight will ever light their sailing ship over the blue waters of the Wabash.

WHEN THE FAST LIMITED TRAIN PULLED OUT, BOB'S LOVE DREAMS CAME TRUE.

Bob, the farm boy, Bob, the boy Engineer, and Phoebe on their way in a blaze of glory, for there are no hearts that are truer than the hearts of the small home town people.

The Iron Horse upon which these two were bound together by a band of love, will now pull the fast train over the polished steel, with Bob and Phoebe on board for the Brotherhood City of Venice, Florida, there to bathe in the sunshine of love's honeymoon dreams.

The Human Heart Controls The World

EVERY human heart can tell its own story, and when that time comes there is lived a story more powerful than fiction, for it is a chapter from the book of life that will live on.

WHEN you read this story on the way from boyhood to young manhood, penned through the eyes of memory, you will instantly realize Bob's story will make a gift book that will keep on giving.

THIS American boy will be remembered for the boy he was and the reader will follow him through these pages with interest over the trail of his young life, the like of which has never before been seen in printed pages. IT IS A STORY YOU WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER.

THERE IS NO PLACE IN A LOCOMOTIVE CAB FOR A COWARD

The Boston Special Train Crossing the Desert in New Mexico

TOURISTS on the way from Boston to Calif
Royalton the Boy Engineer at the t
wild horses in the night making fa

**This story from boyhood to yo
of the greatest thrilling true**

ROBERT ROYALTON & HIS CO $15.00
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